

*Arunachalal Thou dost root out the ego of those  
who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachalal*

# The Mountain Path

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Vol. 13, No. 1V, October 1976

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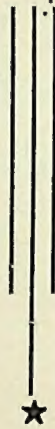
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*THE MOUNTAIN PATH,*  
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1st October 1976

V. GANESAN,  
Managing Editor.







Oh Undeiled, abide  
Thou in my heart so that  
there may be everlasting  
joy, Arunachala !

—The Marital Garland  
of Letters, verse 52

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# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(A QUARTERLY)

"Arunachala ! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala !"  
—The Marital Garland of Letters, verse 1

Vol. 13

OCTOBER 1976

No. IV

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— Editor.

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The aim of this journal is to set forth the traditional wisdom of all religions and all ages, especially as testified to by their saints and mystics, and to clarify the paths available to seekers in the conditions of our modern world.

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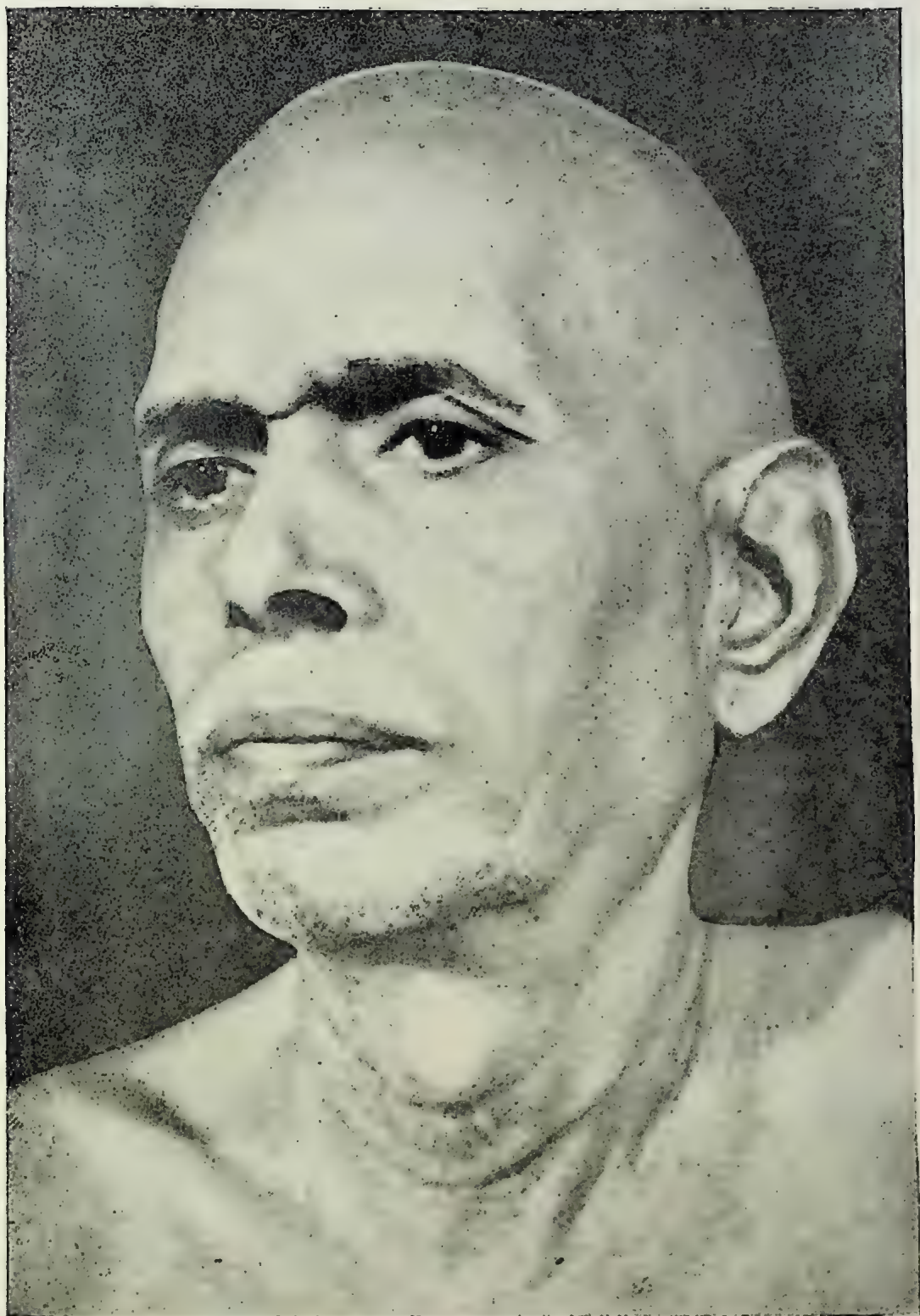
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is dedicated to

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# The Mountain Path

Vol. 13. No. IV, October 1976

## EDITORIAL

# YOGA

IT is well-known that *yama* (self-restraint), *niyama* (discipline), *āsana* (posture), *prāṇāyāma* (breath-regulation), *pratyābhāra* (withdrawal of the senses), *dhāraṇa* (concentration), *dhyaṇa* (meditation) and *samādhi* (abidance in oneness) are the eight limbs of Raja Yoga. *Yama* deals with essential moral foundation of spiritual life, and consists of non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence (*brahmacharya*) and freedom from greed. The last one (*aparigraha*) is what is meant by *Mā gridhah* — “don’t be covetous” in the very first *mantra* of *Isopanishad*, because the whole universe is pervaded by the Lord ; and therefore one is advised to go through life unattached to the ephemeral. These five traits themselves of *yama* carried to perfection, elevate one very high spiritually and endow one with power to do great good to the world.

*Niyama* consists of purity, contentment, austerity (*tapas*), deep study, and devotion and surrender to God. Without cleanliness and purity there can be no spiritual life. “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God”, says Jesus. And Tiruvalluvar says : “To be pure at heart is the essence of all virtue ; everything else is superfluous”. Contentment confers on one a care-free and happy mind, and conduces to spiritual advancement. All genuine greatness is the result of *tapas*, the focussing of all one’s attention upon one thing. That is the advice given by Varuna to his son, Bhrigu, in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. Guided by Varuna, Bhrigu advances step by step through *tapas* till he gains the goal of *Brahma-jñāna*. *Tapas*

is always associated with *swādhyāya*, deep study of the accumulated knowledge and experience found in Sacred Lore. The great Epic, *Rāmāyana*, begins with the words, *tapas-swādhyāya-nirata*, one solely dedicated to *tapas* and *swādhyāya*. *Japa* of the Names and Mantras of God also are included in *swādhyāya*. It is stated in *Yoga Sutrās* (I : 28, 29) that the *japa* of *Pranava* (AUM) and meditation on its significance remove obstacles on the path and bring about enlightenment. *Sri Ramana Gita* says : “By repetition of *mantras* or of pure *Pranava* alone, one’s mind is withdrawn from sense-objects and becomes identical with one’s own real Being”. (III : 10, 11). Devotion and surrender to God (*Īswara-pranidhāna*), we find it affirmed in two *sutrās* (I : 23 and III : 45) lead one to *Samādhi*, the ultimate aim of yoga. The *Gita* too says that by complete surrender one reaches the eternal abode, the Home of Supreme *Shanti* (XVIII : 62).

Through *Āsana* (posture) and *prāṇāyāma* (regulation of *prāṇa*, the life-current), which make up *Hatha Yoga*, one becomes perfectly hale and healthy, free from the least trace of any disease. It also helps one to get established in *brahmacharya*, which is indispensable for spiritual progress. However, for one whose aim is attunement with the Supreme (*Samādhi*), success in achieving some comfortable posture for sustained meditation and regulation of *prāṇa* to keep it smooth and unruffled will do.

The next step is withdrawal of the mind and senses from all objectivity (*pratyābhāra*). The



natural inclination of the senses and mind is to run after objects and get split in diverse ways. One has to conquer this tendency in order to probe deep within for the Self, the inner Reality.

*Dhāraṇa* (fixing the mind on one thing) and *dhyāna* (unbroken continuity of meditation, 'like the flow of oil or a stream') lead to *Samādhi*, total absorption of the mind in the inner Self or Reality. One has to achieve it with effort to begin with, but it becomes easier until at last one abides in it as one's own intrinsic reality. That is the pristine nature of the One Self, because everything in manifestation is in reality nothing but That. This natural state of the Self is *Sabaja Sthiti*, or *Sabaja Samādhi*, which so many of us have seen in Bhagavan Ramana. One is reminded here of the two Names of Maha-Vishnu — *yogah* and *yogavidām netha* — Yoga (Himself) and the Leader of the knowers of Yoga.

This is the goal of all Yogas as we may clearly see by a deep study of *Sri Bhagavad Gita*, where the Teacher is the Lord of (all) Yogas (*Yogeswara*), and the disciple is Arjuna alert (with his bow) and listening to the Master with complete faith in Him.

Yoga is defined by Patanjali as the control and elimination of thought-movements (*chitta-vritti-nirōdha*). The Seer abides then in his own real nature when he ceases to be identified with and involved in thought-modifications. This is the gist of the first three of the *Yoga Sutrās* and it has been conveyed by Bhagavan Ramana in the verse: 'The *chitta* weaned from objectivity, realising itself as Pure Awareness, is the finding out of ultimate Reality'. Yoga, then, is inherence in the inner Self, as stated repeatedly in the *Song Celestial* (*Bhagavad Gita*).

One is asked to do one's work established in *yoga* (*yogasthah kuru karmani*) — II : 48. In the latter half of the verse, the resultant equanimity of heart is defined as *yoga* (*samatvam yoga uchyate*). The term *buddhi-yuktah* (V : 50) means one whose *buddhi* is attuned to the Self. Such a one will naturally be choiceless and perfect in whatever he does,

because he acts impelled by the inner Self and not by the ego-mind. That is the significance of *yogah karmasu kausalam* — 'Yoga is skill in action'. It is stated again (II : 51) that the wise attuned to inner Awareness dwell in perennial peace free from birth and bondage. It is further clarified that "when the intellect (understanding) free from all confusion and disturbance remains steady in *Samādhi*, then one reaches yoga". *Samādhi* is but firm abidance as the Self. It is known as *Sthitaprajnatā* as well. A *Sthitaprajna* will never get disturbed by the senses and it follows one who aspires for firm abidance in the Self has to keep the senses and mind under perfect control. Once a glimpse of the inherent and spontaneous bliss of the Self is got, pleasures of the senses are found insipid. "There is nothing as purifying as *Jnana* and one finds it in oneself perfected naturally by *Yoga*" (IV : 38). By *Yoga* one gets over all bondage of *Karma* and one is freed from all doubts by *Jnana* (IV : 41). We find *Yoga* and *Jnana* used as equivalents: "Cutting off all inherent doubt born of ignorance with the Sword of *Jnana*, dwell in *Yoga* and rise up (to your real stature)" (IV : 42). "*Jnana* and *Yoga* are considered as different only by the immature; one who understands one of them understands the other. The goal of *Jnana* and *Yoga* are the same and so he alone understands who sees them both as the same" (V : 4, 5).

It is well-known that one cannot reach Brahman without complete renunciation. But then "renunciation is impossible without *Yoga* and only the sage established in *Yoga* reaches Brahman thereby" (V : 6). The full significance of the term *Yoga-yukta* is given in the next verse as: "one who is absolutely pure, has subdued the mind and senses and remains as the One Self of all beings". Such a one is blemishless in the midst of all activity, whatever it might be.

The *Yogi* is described as one who finds happiness, delight and light within himself, abides as Brahman and enjoys the felicity of release in Brahman (V : 24).

It is stated again that he who does his destined work without looking forward for

any rewards, he alone is a *samyasi* and *yogi* and not he who relinquishes his duty. *Samyasa* and *yoga* are thus the same. One cannot be a *yogi* without overcoming all craving. For a spiritual aspirant in the initial stages activity is helpful ; it is tranquillity that prevails at the end. One is said to be an adept in Yoga when one has craving neither for objects of the senses nor for any activity prompted by an ego. (VI : 2, 3, 4).

The initiate is told to practise uninterrupted yoga (elimination of thought-waves and concentration on the inner Self) in solitude with the mind and ego well-controlled and indifferent towards externals. And the result of such yogic effort is described as follows : "When the heart is freed of all objectivity by the practice of yoga and where seeing the Self by the Self one is perfectly composed within by oneself ; attaining which one does not look upon anything else as higher, established in which one is not at all swayed by even the worst of calamities ; freeing oneself thus from the bondage of the intellect is known as yoga and such yoga should certainly be practised with unabating zeal".

Meditating upon the Self thus, the yogi gets over all imperfection and spontaneously enjoys supreme bliss born of the touch of grace (VI : 28). One who is attuned to yoga sees the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self which is the same everywhere. One who is established thus in unity never swerves from it whatever one's outer mode of life may be" (29, 30).

In verse 12 of Ch. VIII beginning : "Closing the outlets of the senses and making the mind established at the Heart" it is indicated that the source of the mind is the Heart. In verse 14 the Lord says that he is easy of access to the ever-attuned yogi who remembers him always with undivided heart. In the concluding verse of the chapter the Lord says that by this excellent yoga one reaches the Supreme Abode, the origin of everything.

In verse 10 of Ch. X the Lord says that he grants *buddhi-yoga* to the devotees who adore him with love, ever attuned. Again in verses

6, 7 and 8 of Ch. XII the Lord says : "Those who, having Me as their goal, dedicate all their actions to Me, one with Me in Yoga, I lift them up, from the ocean of death and travail. I am never far away from devotees mad after Me. *Fix your mind on Me alone, make your buddhi abide in Me : then you will dwell in Me alone, henceforward ; doubt not*". In the last of these verses, Yoga is described though the word is not mentioned.

The seeker of enlightenment has to cultivate "unswerving love towards Me by remaining one with Me in Yoga" (Ch. XIII, 10). Steadiness (*dhriti*) and Yoga are equated : "Steadiness gained by unswerving Yoga by which the mind, *prana*, senses and all activities are controlled, that is *sātvic* steadiness" (XVIII : 33). *Dhriti*, *Stbithi*, *Nishtha*, all mean one thing, unswerving inherence in the Self. This is the central message of Bhagavan Ramana : *Abide in the Atman (Atma-nishthō-bhava tvam)*. It is said in *Upadesa Sara* : "The mind remaining steady at its abode, the Heart, is indeed the greatest achievement, *Bhakti*, *Yoga* and *Jnana*". "The spontaneous glow of the Self entirely free from the ego is the greatest *tapas*".

A word may now be said about the yogic centres within the human system. Starting from and including *Mūlādhāra* at the base of the spine, there are six centres — *swādhishthāna*, *manipūra*, *anāhata*, *visuddhi* and *ājñā*. All these centres except *Mūlādhāra* and *Ājñā* are within the spinal column. *Manipūra* is located in the navel region ; *swādhishthāna* between that and *Mūlādhāra* ; *anāhata* in the region of the chest and *visuddhi* at the base of the neck in the rear. *Ājñā chakra* is not between the brows as is usually described and believed to be ; it is the central cavity at the meeting place of the vertical line connecting the crown of the head and the soft palate and the horizontal line connecting the two ears. It is this cavity that has been referred to as *Ājñā-chakra-antarāla* in the Name, *Ājñāchakrāṇīrūlasthā* ('Dweller in the cavity of the *Ājñā Chakra*') in the Litany of the Thousand Names of Lalita (*Lalitāsahasranāma Stotram*).



*Kundalini*, the dynamic *prana-sakti*, when it gets awakened rises up and passes through the central channel within the spine known as *sushumna*, crossing the centres and breaking through obstacles as an inebriating warm current and reaches the *Sahasrara* at the top. From there it flows down in streams as a cool current of ecstasy spreading all over the system. On reaching the *Sahasrara* one falls into *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*. There is a channel in the front also starting from the Heart going up to *Sahasrara*. This is the *Sushumna* of the *Jnanis*. The passage in the *Taittiriya Upanishad* beginning '*sa ya esbōntar bridaya ākasah*'<sup>1</sup> referring to *Hridaya Ākasa* within, the soft palate known as *Indra Yoni* and the crown of the head, evidently means this. The light of the Atman, which goes up to the brain and gets reflected and diffused as the ego and the mind, has to be brought back to the Heart and

made to merge in the Heart, its source. The details of the teaching regarding the spiritual Heart on the right side of the chest and the *Sushumna* of the *Jnanis* may be found in Ch. V and IX of *Sri Ramana Gita*.

Though the Path of *Kundalini* (the *Prana Sakti*) leads one on ultimately to the Self, the followers of the Path of *Jnana* consider the Path of the Heart as the direct Path to reach the goal of perfect inherence in the Self, the ultimate aim of all spiritual *sadhana*. It is only when the *chitta* is divested of all thoughts that the Self is realised, and all other methods to free the mind of thoughts are long and indirect. By searching for the root-thought 'I', it gets eliminated as nothing but a shadow and the real I, the One Self of all, shines forth in unclouded splendour.

---

<sup>1</sup>Anuvaka 6 of the *Siksha Valli*—I

## SILENCE

---

By 'Nandi'

Blessed Silence, tell me where  
I may meet you.

At midnight, majestic as a mountain,  
Before dawn, soft, thin as the morning breeze,  
In a ruined house, frightening like a ghost,  
Devouring on a summer day  
A terrific peal of thunder and its echo,  
Do you follow me when I walk alone?

Can I find you in the stillness after a chant,  
In the interval between notes of music?

Or are you only there  
In the emptiness of infinite space?

Are you not hidden in a word,  
A symbol, a gesture, a glance?  
I sense your presence and then  
Away you slip beyond the stars.

Sacred Silence, come  
Near me, touch me,  
Be with me. In your stillness  
Let me cease to move and in your being  
Merge my being.

---

# Advaita and Worship

By

S. Sankaranarayanan

THERE is an interesting passage in *Advaita Siddhi*, a work of the great sixteenth century Advaitic exponent, Sri Madhusudana Saraswati. An elaborate argument on *Nirākāra vāda*, the formless nature of the Supreme Brahman, ends with a verse<sup>1</sup> which has since become famous, proclaiming the Acharya's adoration of Sri Krishna :

"I know no Supreme Principle other than Krishna, with his lotus-like eyes, face handsome like the full-moon, lips red like the Bimba fruit, hands bedecked with the flute, with his garment of yellow colour and with his complexion resembling a fresh rain-cloud".

How can such a colourful lyric on a personal God crown a superb structure for the Formless Brahman supported by brilliant arguments? Is not this bad logic? Could the great Acharya be confused in his mind? Is he torn between his proclaimed professions about Advaita and his personal faith in the efficacy of worship? Is this an isolated aberration in an individual life?

People generally hold that Advaita and worship are mutually contradictory and cannot go together. Advaita means non-duality, one without a second, a complete identification with the Absolute Brahman that is Formless and Qualityless, *Nirākāra* and *Nirguna*. And it arises out of supreme knowledge *Jñāna*.

On the other hand, worship arises from *bhakti*, devotion. *Bhakti* comes from the Sanskrit root *bhaj*, to adore. The root *bhaj* also means 'to divide' (cf. *bbāga*, *vibhajana*). So division is implicit in *bhakti*. There should be two — the devotee and worshipper and the object of devotion and worship. In the state of Advaita, non-duality, there cannot be

any worship as there are no two entities, the worshipper and the worshipped. When you attain the supreme knowledge, a state of complete identity, there is no scope for division or devotion. Such knowledge is abstract and is itself the Supreme Impersonal, Nirguna Brahman. Thus it is usual for the traditional philosophies to admit a dichotomy between Advaita and worship, *Jnana* and *bhakti*, *Nirguna* and *Saguna* Brahman. The path of devotion, *Bhakti Marga*, is considered somewhat inferior to the path of knowledge, *Jnana Marga*. The worship of a Personal God is conceded to a *mandādbikāri*, the dull or not so competent aspirant as a preliminary or intermediate stage on the spiritual path. The ultimate aim in *Jnana*, the experience of non-duality. If one argues that Acharya Sankara himself evinced interest in temple worship and arranged for the installation of Sri Chakra in many temples, one is told that the Acharya's motive was *lōkasangraha*, the welfare and holding together of society, a mere concession to less evolved souls.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the Sri Chakra, cast in Meru *prastāra* in stone in the temple at Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai, was installed by Sri Ramana Maharshi himself. This is a cubit square and of proportional height, cut out of a single piece of granite. Underneath the Meru in stone is a Sri Chakra plate in solid gold also installed by the Maharshi.

Once again the same questions arise. It is well known that the Maharshi's teachings are universal, are beyond any creed or clime. He

<sup>1</sup> *Vamśi vibhūṣita karāt navañīradābhāt  
pitāmbarāt aruṇabimba-phalādharaṣṭhāt  
purnendusundaramukhāt aravinda netrāt  
kṛṣṇāt param kimapi tatvam aham  
na jāne..*



does not favour any particular religion or form of worship. He is ever immersed in the vast silent ocean of bliss wherein the roaring rivers of all religions fall and lose their identity. Besides his countrymen, many from other lands are drawn to his presence in quest of peace. How came it then that a temple in the traditional Hindu style has been erected in his Ashram? How was it that the Maharshi himself in true *Tantric* tradition participated in the installation of the Sri Chakra? What part can devotion and worship play in the trenchant *Vichara Marga* of the Maharshi? Does not the worship of a Personal God with name, form and attributes mar the atmosphere of Impersonality that has been created over the years by the Maharshi's presence in the Ashram?

These are valid questions to which satisfactory answers can be found only when we delve deep into the life and teachings of the Maharshi. It is commonly believed that the philosophy of the Maharshi is simple and pure Advaita as taught by Sankara and that Maharshi only made this knowledge available to more people, so that even the masses might derive the benefit. As long ago as in 1931, Sri Kapali Sastriar in the *Introduction* to his Samskrit Commentary on *Saddarsana* (*Forty Verses on Reality*) had drawn attention to the essential difference in the teachings of the Maharshi and Sri Sankara. To quote :

"The great Advaita Acharya Sri Sankara and Sri Maharshi Ramana agree upon the central teaching of the Upanishads, the oneness of the self with Brahman. But there are certain points of difference between them. The passages stating the world as false, unreal or illusory do not leap to the eye in the Upanishads but are discoverable only by a close search and they are taken as affirming the illusory character of the world by some sort of interpretation ; after all they do not affirm the illusoriness of the world in clear categorical terms. Maharshi holds that the statement of the illusory nature of the world is but a means of creating disgust for

what is impermanent in the world, thus driving you home to search for the self, for what is permanent in you. In the authoritative works of Acharya Sankara's school certain truths are either omitted or slightly touched and if mentioned at all, they are expounded in such a way as to give room to misunderstanding and misapprehension. In the works of Sri Maharshi we find these dealt with in clear and unmistakable language".

The Maharshi holds that the world is no illusion. For both the ignorant and the wise, the universe exists. Only, the ignorant one sees the truth of the visible universe alone, while the wise one goes behind, to the Formless Truth that is the base and support of the visible universe.<sup>2</sup> Also the Maharshi does not support the view that in the work-a-day world there is duality, *dwaita*, and only when you realise the Supreme purpose behind everything there is non-duality, *advaita*. The Maharshi cites the familiar story of the ten travellers crossing a river in spate. When they reached the other bank they wanted to make sure that all of them had arrived safely. Each one began to count, leaving himself out, and got the figure nine, till some one else came on the scene and pointed out the mistake. The 'missing' tenth man was never absent, he had always been there. In the same way, *advaita* is the essential thing and it is there all the time.<sup>3</sup>

Again, to say that the Maharshi's path is the path of knowledge, *Jnana Marga*, is oversimplifying the whole issue. It is true that the Maharshi asks one to find out the root of 'I' with due *vichāra* and *viveka*, enquiry and discrimination. He wants you relentlessly and ruthlessly to pursue the elusive 'I' and track it down to its source. But where does he ask you to locate the 'I'? In the heart, in the centre of emotion, from where true devotion, *bhakti*, wells up. You merge the mind in the heart by collecting yourself and taking a deep plunge or else by controlling the movement of

<sup>2</sup> *Saddarsana*, sloka 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, sloka 39.

*prana*. Man, the Upanishadic Seers have said, is full of mind no doubt, but he is also the leader of the vital body, *manomayah prāna sarīra netā*. He has feeling as well as thought. He cannot follow *Jnana Marga* to the exclusion of *bhakti*, or the path of *bhakti* without resorting to *Jnana*.

If we set down the Maharshi as a pure *Jnani*, how can we explain his devotional works like *Aksaramanamālai* (*Marital Garland of Letters*, which is full of yearning love). Indeed, his *Arunachala Stuti Panchakam* (*Five Hymns to Arunachala*) is a pentad of praise to a personal God. Also it is common knowledge that the Maharshi was deeply moved, at times to tears, when any genuine experience of intense devotion was reported or read out to him.

In fact, the Maharshi sees no contradiction between the path of knowledge and the path of devotion. *Jnana*, knowledge always ends in love, *Bhakti*. Similarly when you are devoted, when you love, you merge completely in the object of your love and know it in its entirety. *Bhakti* culminates in the Knowledge by being, which is *Jnana*. Also when something is dear to a person, it is the Self in it that is dear ; *ātmanah kāmāya sarvam priyam bhavati*. In the path of devotion, you become devoted to the Self in every thing, surrender yourself completely to it and become one with it. Thus to the Maharshi *Jnana* and *Bhakti* are complementary terms. One cannot exist without the other.

Also worship which arises from devotion is not an inferior or intermediate stage on the way to the experience of non-duality, *advaita*. The Maharshi does not believe in arm-chair *advaita*, which merely repeats parrot-like the *mahā vākyās* of the Upanishads. *Advaita* in practice, the Maharshi terms Worship, *upāsana*. He declares that nothing is gained if the worship of the Self, earnest seeking and adoration of it, is not there, — *upāsanaṁ vinā siddhir naiva syāt*. The true worshipper always becomes the object of worship and continues the worship. 'Becoming Siva, adore Siva' — *Sivō bhūtvā Sivam yajet*, say the Tantrics.

To the Maharshi then the experience of the *Saguna* and *Nirguna* Brahman is not mutually

exclusive, but simultaneous. Because, the Brahman is not only *Nirguna* without qualities, and *Saguna* with qualities, but also *Ananta-guna* of infinite qualities. He is also beyond the qualities, *gunāt parat*. That is why, the Maharshi wrote two benedictory verses, instead of one, to his *Ulladu Nārpadu*, one describing Pure Absolute Being, *Nirguna*, and the other invoking the *Saguna* form of *Mahesa* who annihilates the very thought of Death. And he goes on to advocate *nishṭa*, an *advaitic* poise in the Self, as well as complete surrender, where one gets devoured by the Self.<sup>4</sup>

To live on, a man among men, in the normal world, after liberation, *jīvan mukti* was the meaning and message of Maharshi's life on earth. *Nirguna* Brahman lived among us as *Saguna* Brahman, with the name and form of Ramana, drawing the hearts of all living beings towards Itself.

Apart from the Maharshi's teachings, his personal life itself speaks volumes. Like Jesus, he considered himself as the son of God. When as young Venkataraman, he decided to leave Madurai, he left behind a letter addressed to his brother to say that he was going away on the behest of his 'Father' to seek Him and in the same breath referred to himself as 'it'. From thence, Personal and impersonal, *Bhakti* and *Jnana*, *Advaita* and Worship, found in him their happy meeting ground and true fulfilment. For, to the young boy, Arunachala was not one more God in the Hindu pantheon, Tiruvannamalai one more holy place in the itinerary of pilgrims. Arunachala Siva was his father, his chosen God, *ishta devatā*. Yes, the hill of the holy beacon itself is steeped in hoary tradition. The votaries of Vishnu see it as the embodiment of *Suddarsana Chakra*. The Tantrics regard it as a form of the great Sri Chakra, as *Meru*, *tantra vido navayoni tu chakram sonadbarūdbharupam usanti*.<sup>5</sup> It is the Linga of Flame, Siva with *Sakti*.

Thus the Maharshi simultaneously yearned for Arunachala and was steeped in the silent Self. Perhaps it was this predominant con-

<sup>4</sup> *Saddarsana*, sloka 10 & 23.

<sup>5</sup> *Vasishṭa* Ganapati Muni in *Umāsahasram* (VIII, 2.14).



sciousness of the *Saguna* Brahman in him, the sense of personal relationship and love, the feeling of the sonhood of man, that made him accept his mother when she who came to him. It was the advent of his mother that led to the growth of an Ashram around him, with a kitchen and lodging arrangements, for devotees and visitors. When, with the active assistance from the Maharshi, the spirit shed the human body, a *Samādbi* was raised on her mortal remains, enabling it to abide permanently in the hallowed spot. There the wandering Maharshi came and settled once for all, and *Sri Ramanasramam* came into being. For the *sakti sūta* that was Maharshi, the constant vivifying presence of *Sakti*, the principle of female energy, was needed to give a meaning to his mission and this was supplied by his mother in her *Samādbi*. The Supreme became the Mother, *Mātbrubbhutesvara*. A new period in the history of Maharshi's life and the Ashram commenced when a temple was constructed over the *Samādbi* containing the Lingam, *Mātbrubbhutesvara*, with his consort, *Yogāmbikā*, and was consecrated with due rites, daily worship was instituted in which the Maharshi took active interest. He enjoyed the silence behind the sound of *Veda Pārāyanā* and the Beauty of the Spirit's union with Matter in the picturesque rituals.

Therefore it should cause no surprise that the Maharshi wanted Sri Chakra as *Meru*

*prastāra* to be installed in the sanctum. Sri Chakra is the basis and continent of all the other Chakras. Holding all the myriad divine forces that are in the cosmos, it is the veritable form-pattern of the dynamic Divine Energy. Besides all these, to the Maharshi, Sri Chakra, as the *Meru*, was the living representation of his dear Arunachala, the Hill of the Holy Flame.

To quote Sri Kapali Sastriar : "The idea behind the *Samādbi* of Sri Maharshi's mother and the construction of the temple of *Mātbrubbhutesvara* later on, is that it is to be a centre of Spiritual Force. The Maharshi said as much and would not have come down the hill and stayed where he had been staying, if he did not intend it to be so. That is why he took such keen interest in the construction of the temple and in the Sri Chakra, which he specially asked me to see when I had been there in 1941 in connection with my writing of the commentary on *Ramana Gita*." <sup>6</sup>

Now that a further *Pratishta* has been done and the Maharshi's own *Samādbi* too is located there, the temple has become a powerful transmitting station of the Peace that surpasses all other experiences, the illimitable Awareness and the inundating Grace, a Light beckoning all who seek a higher life.

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<sup>6</sup> Sri Kapali Sastriar in *The Maharshi*.

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"To rise above joys and sorrows is happiness. It is the hankering after enjoyments that is misery. He is the man of wisdom who knows the true nature of bondage and of freedom. The fool is he who identifies himself with the body and possessions. That is the true path, which leads to Me ; to allow the mind to be distracted is to take the wrong path. The predominance of *sattva* in one's nature is heaven, of ignorance hell. The Guru is the true friend and he is none but Me. What is wrong is the disposition to see good and evil ; what is right is the habit of mind that sees neither."

— *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Book-XI, ch. 19

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# THE DIRECT SĀDHANA

By

Dr. M. Sadashiva Rao

**S**ELF-ENQUIRY is the *sādhana* or spiritual practice which Sri Bhagavan in his Infinite Grace, has made available to modern man.

Many aspirants who take up this *sādhana* get disheartened when they meet with difficulties at the very beginning of their practice and give it up, attributing the difficulties to the advanced nature of the *sādhana*. In reality, the initial difficulties are common to all *sādhana* involving meditation and concentration. Every aspirant experiences them when he tries to make a drastic change from his long accustomed habit of looking outwards at the world to one of *looking inward* and keeping the mind *tranquil and free from thoughts*. Once the aspirant makes this change, Self-enquiry is found to be easy and simple. How to make this change?

In the recorded talks, Bhagavan has given brief directives on how one should develop the habit of looking inwards and cultivate a thought-free mind. The full implications of these directives and a few subsequent steps of the *sādhana* proper are described in this article.

*"The mind is by nature restless. Give it peace. Make it free from distractions and train it to look inwards. Make this a habit. This is done by ignoring the outer world and removing the obstacles to peace of mind."*<sup>1</sup>

Restlessness of the mind, the main obstacle to the *sādhana*, is caused by a rush of thoughts created by pre-occupation with the outer world and its distractions. It is necessary to develop the habit of ignoring the outer world, of removing from the mind the thoughts created by it and of looking inwards. It is necessary, therefore, to develop *vairāgya* which Bhagavan defines as "*loss of interest in the non-self*."<sup>2</sup>

Interest in, or devotion to, the Self or God within can be developed only if interest in everything else is lost. The same is implied in Bhagavan's words :

*"Drawing-in the thoughts, restraining them and preventing them from going outwards is vairāgya. Fixing them on the Self is sādhanā or abhyāsa (practice)."*<sup>3</sup>

*Vairāgya* and *abhyāsa* are both essential for the *sādhana*. *Vairāgya* turns away the mind from the outer world and makes it look inwards. *Abhyāsa* fixes the mind on the Self. Says Bhagavan :

*"Only after perfect vairāgya, the mind becomes steady."*<sup>4</sup> However, *vairāgya* does not mean giving up of one's duties and responsibilities in the outer world. Says Bhagavan :

*"Give up thoughts, you need not give up anything (else)."*<sup>5</sup>

## A Thought-free Mind

In addition to *vairāgya*, a thought-free mind is a *sine-qua-non* for the *sādhana*. Thoughts are created by *vāsanās* or hidden tendencies of the mind. These are mostly *viśaya vāsanās* related to objects of sense gratification and can be easily removed from the mind by the steady silent quest ; "Who am I ?" The mind turned inward concentrates one - pointedly on the single thought "I". If with mind introverted, one concentrates on the single thought "I", one at first finds a series of stray thoughts rising up to drive out the single thought. The stray thoughts are born of *viśaya vāsanās*. In this context, Bhagavan says :

<sup>1</sup> Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Day by Day with Sri Bhagavan, p. 317.

<sup>4</sup> Talks, p. 312.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 45.



*"All that is inside will have to come out. There is no other way than to pull up the mind when it goes astray."*<sup>6</sup>

The coming into the open of the hidden *vāsanās* in the form of thoughts, far from being an obstacle, gives the required opportunity to remove the *vāsanās* from the mind.

### *Removing Vishaya-Vāsanās*

Three different methods of preliminary practice for clearing the mind of its *vishaya vāsanās* are given here.

The first and the usual method is carried out during the initial practice of one-pointed concentration. As stray thoughts come to the mind, one after another, each thought is rejected or thrown out with a firm will. One should not play with the thought, as it generates another thought and this will go on *ad infinitum*. It must be thrown out of the mind forthwith and the mind more intensely concentrated on the single thought "I". One — pointed concentration can now proceed with little interference from stray thoughts. This is where *vairāgya* or lack of interest in the outer world has its value. With progress in the *sādhana*, *vairāgya* becomes perfect and stray thoughts seldom interfere.

The second method of removing *vishaya-vāsanās* from the mind is carried out without wasting the time set apart for the *sādhana*. Bhagavan tells a devotee much plagued with stray thoughts :

*"If you are able to be without any thoughts while awake, it is enough."*<sup>7</sup>

This is valuable advice. The practice of keeping the mind free from stray thoughts in leisure hours, helps to keep the mind thought-free during the *sādhana*. This practice is best carried out with mind extroverted (as in normal activities) and with eyes open to the world. It brings about, at the same time, a gradual loss of interest in the outer world. One-pointed concentration can be carried out with eyes open without being disturbed by what is seen.

The third and the most effective method is *Satsang*. It involves no special efforts on the

part of the aspirant. A close contact with a *Sadguru* (one who has realised the Self) inhibits *vishaya vāsanās*, promotes introversion of the mind and permits one-pointed concentration to proceed smoothly. Even a place hallowed by the *Sadguru* has the same effect. The aspirant should practise under this most potent influence as long as possible. Bhagavan asks :

*"If association with Sages is obtained, to what purpose are the various methods of self-discipline?"*<sup>8</sup>

### *Deep Meditation*

When the aspirant acquires, through the practices described, the ability to remain thought-free, one-pointed concentration on the single thought "I" proceeds undisturbed. The thought "I" must be as abstract as possible. It should not be associated with any other thought, such as 'Who am I?', 'I is the ego', etc., as it delays going into deep meditation. A devotional feeling that "I" represents pure Being or the Self or God helps. With practice, the concentration on "I" becomes more intense and the mind gets fully introverted. This is deep meditation and Self-enquiry proper. For sustained practice, certain other conditions are also necessary. The aspirant should be seated comfortably with back and head erect and body relaxed. Eyes may be kept closed or open. There should be no undercurrent of hurry or anxiety whatever. Under these propitious conditions, the thought "I" occupies the whole mind, which now becomes *sāttvic* and represents Pure "I" or Pure Awareness. Bhagavan has given valuable advice in this context :

*"On waking from sleep, but before becoming aware of the world, there is (experienced) the Pure 'I'."*<sup>9</sup>

If this is recalled to memory and concentrated upon, he says, one can meditate with eyes open without being disturbed by the world phenomena. He says further :

<sup>6</sup> *Day by Day*, p. 44.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 229.

<sup>8</sup> *Collected Works of Sri Maharshi* (1959), p. 87.

<sup>9</sup> *Talks*, p. 162.

"This (Pure 'I') is the only passage to the Self-luminous Supreme Being."<sup>10</sup>

If deep meditation succeeds in holding on to the Pure "I" it would be a short-cut to reach the Heart since it is the Self. The reason why Bhagavan calls Self-enquiry a *direct* path will now be clear. The thought "I" representing the individual being or ego gets lost smoothly and rapidly in the Pure "I" or the Supreme Being. In the meditation on the Name of God or a *mantra*, further time and efforts are involved.

### *Sinking of the Mind in the Heart*

The sinking of the mind in the Heart can be clearly felt and recognised. Bhagavan has explained it in these words,

"The thought-process that is struck by reason of swoon, sleep, excessive joy, consuming sorrow, fear, etc., enters its own place, namely, the Heart. The person is not then aware of this entry into the Heart, whereas in *samādhi* he is clearly aware of such entry."<sup>11</sup>

*Samādhi* is the state that ensues on the sinking of the mind in the Heart. Explaining its occurrence in deep meditation, Bhagavan says.

"What really happens is that the thinker (mind), the object of thinking 'I' and thinking (one-pointed concentration) all merge in the One Source (the Heart) which is Consciousness and Bliss."<sup>12</sup>

The triads (*triputī*), described as "Knower, Known and Knowing" and as "Meditator, Object of Meditation and the Process of Meditation", cease to exist (in consciousness) when the mind sinks into the Heart. The direct experience of the Self, says Bhagavan, is "going beyond duality and triads".<sup>13</sup> Going beyond the triads cannot be known by the aspirant when it occurs. But, loss of duality between his individual being and the Self can be clearly felt. It is the union of the individual being (mind or consciousness) with the Supreme Being (Pure Consciousness). It is a thought-free state and a moment of great Bliss and Exultation for the aspirant. The experience lasts only for a moment since the mind comes

out of the Heart owing to the pull of the *vāsanās* and the sense of duality revives.

### *Abidance in the Self*

The sinking of the mind in the Heart for the first time is a great moment for the aspirant as it brings Guru's Grace to support all his further efforts. On this Bhagavan says:

"Guru's Grace is really inside you, in your Heart; and the moment you effect subsidence or merger of the mind at its Source (the Heart), by any of the methods, Grace rushes forth spouting as from a spring within you."<sup>14</sup>

When this happens, the aspirant will, of his own accord, surrender himself completely to the Guru.

With Guru's Grace, the aspirant continues to practise deep meditation to the point of sinking the mind in the Heart until it becomes effortless and spontaneous. It becomes possible for the aspirant to hold on to the Heart during his waking hours and carry on his worldly duties. This is still not a permanent merger of the mind in the Heart, but only a temporary subsidence, for the *vāsanās* still persist. Bhagavan calls this "*abidance in the Self*". He says:

"One should abide in the Self without the sense of being the doer, even when engaged in work born of destiny, like a mad man."<sup>15</sup>

Abidance in the Self helps to remove *vāsanās* from the mind. Apart from loss of the sense of doership, it has a profound influence on the character and outlook of the aspirant. He gains perfect equanimity to meet any situation.

### *Samādhi*

In the beginning, sustained efforts are required to go fully into the *samādhi* state. In the *sādhana* of Self-enquiry *samādhi* is not a state of mental blank or unconsciousness, as the English word "trance" may suggest. It is

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 283.

<sup>11</sup> *Ramana Gita*, canto 5, verses 20 & 21.

<sup>12</sup> *Day by Day*, p. 83.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 271.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>15</sup> *Self Enquiry, Collected Works*, p. 21.



a state of intense wakefulness with an overpowering feeling of perfect Bliss. It is the Real State called *jāgrat-sushupthi* underlying the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. It cannot be described in words. *Ribhu Gita*<sup>16</sup> contains a unique description of it. In the earlier stage of the practice of *sāmadhi*, thoughts intrude. This is called *savikalpa samādhi*; there is still a sense of duality (differentiation) between one's own being and the Supreme Being. This passes on into *nirvikalpa samādhi* when there is no duality and no thought. The Self is experienced as a Vast Expanse of Pure Consciousness, a waveless ocean of Awareness Pure. However, these are temporary states and so the mind reverts to duality when the *samādhi* ends. One must practise either *savikalpa* or *nirvikalpa samādhi* regularly while leading an active life in the

world so that the *sabaja samādhi* of the Jnani may result. He says .

*"Realisation must be amidst all the turmoils of life."*<sup>17</sup>

In *sabaja samādhi* all the *vāsanās* are lost and the mind has merged permanently in the Self without any possibility of reversion to duality. Thoughts, words and actions are fully possible. This is the Supreme State of Inherence in the Self which is all-Pervading and all-Powerful. Says Bhagavan :

*"It is very seldom that a person can realise his True Being without the Grace of the Guru."*<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *The Mountain Path*, Vol. 9 ; pp. 45, 121.

<sup>17</sup> *Talks*, p. 132.

<sup>18</sup> *Spiritual Instruction*, Chapter 1, Question 4.

## TWO TRADING SONGS

If I must live in the market  
let me trade wisely,  
not exchanging this set  
of *samskaras*  
for that one —

let this bundle, rather,  
be traded for that one  
not bound by the jute  
of seasons and places.

### II

Who would trade with this rascal  
who dwells in the dusty bazaar,  
wrapped up in the rags  
of the long dead ?

He wants to barter  
a heap of worthless fragments  
for an imperishable jewel —

His angry expression  
makes the monkey-children laugh,  
and he falls asleep  
in midst of the transaction.

His eyes burn with greed,  
brushed only by a light web  
of dreams . . . .

Only you, Ramana Bhagavan,  
would deal with such a fellow,  
accept his outrageous terms  
and let him sink his worthless freight  
in the deep ocean of your silence.

By

' Kanji '

# PERSON OR SELF?

By  
Norman Fraser

SOME years ago while working as librarian of the Buddhist Society in London I had the unique opportunity of browsing among the hundreds of volumes collected together during a lifetime of research by that great western Buddhist, Christmas Humphreys. I was already well acquainted with the basics of Buddhism with which I found myself in complete accord. There was, however, one very important principle which kept on bothering me, *anatta*. So I busied myself with the Pali Canon, etc., in the hopes of coming to a definite understanding of this matter.

Now, under the influence of diehard Theravadists, I was almost convinced to accept the doctrine that I did not exist. Yes, there it was, the centre of arguments: *anattā* — was not the Buddha himself known as *Anattāvādi*? However, the other main influence in my life at the time was my friend Joel Goldsmith who, though a student of Buddhism, taught no such thing as *anattā* as understood from the Hinayana. So my problem was how to reconcile the seemingly opposed approaches to reality.

Before his *mahā-samādhi* Joel had told us about Ramana Maharshi and recommended us to take *The Mountain Path* which was about to appear. A study of Bhagavan's teachings in the *Collected Works* and Arthur Osborne's excellent book about them gave me the vital connecting link.

The very postulation of *Atma-vichāra* is a confident affirmation that I exists even if I

does not at the time know who I is! And we must remember that the Buddha never actually denied the *Atman*, and Christ said, "I am the way, the truth and the life."

It seems to me that the great misunderstanding, the mist that went up from the earth (in Genesis) and watered the whole face of the ground, was man's somehow coming to think that he had a 'selfhood' apart from the one and only Self. Jesus spent most of his time combating this error in one way or another, and I am now convinced that Siddārtha did the same in his own way. But both were misunderstood and misquoted though St. John's gospel and some of the Mahayana *sūtras* point plainly to the truth — when one's eyes are open.

When understood, most of the great teachers of all times have stressed the necessity to wake up from the false sense of self — what C. G. Jung called the of-itself-created *persona*; what Mrs. Eddy called the non-existent mortal mind; — to name only two well-known figures of our times whose philosophies, at any rate on the surface, could not have been more widely separated. But it is Bhagavan, with his reiterated insistence on "*who am I?*" who has, so to speak, put the matter in a nutshell and given us the sure way to the intuitive wordless understanding of what Is. It was his life's work well done and mankind will learn to be grateful for this unique ray of light he has left in the world.



# SOME TAOIST PHRASES

By

Murdoch Kirby

*Sbe* : In the Lao Tzu book, the *Tao Te Ching*, phrases keep turning up that I am not clear about ; I mean the Valley Spirit, the Mysterious Female, the Uncarved Block. Can we get them sorted out to get an idea of what they mean ?

*He* : There is one chapter we could go through, several of these names come in it. It is Chapter 28. But I am going to leave a bit out of the middle of it as it splits a saying which occurs elsewhere. It has been suggested that it is a later insertion.<sup>1</sup> In Chapter 28 it says :

He who knows the masculine but keeps to the feminine becomes the ravine of the world.  
Being the ravine of the world he will not lose his inherent power.

He returns to the state of infancy.

He who knows the white . . . but keeps to the discoloured will become the valley of the world.

Being the valley of the world he has a never-failing power.

He returns to the uncarved block.

*Sbe* : To start at the beginning, what is meant by the masculine and the feminine ?

*He* : They make me think of the two primary trigrams in the *I Ching*, and Hexagrams they form. The trigram Ch'ien, ☰ is Heaven, the Creative, the Masculine, Yang. The trigram K'un, ☷, is Earth, the Receptive, the Feminine, Yin. The *I Ching*, one of the earliest Chinese books, is an oracle, claiming to give advice on any human situation. The advice given with the Chien Hexagram deals with action, with taking action, refraining from taking action, with being vigilant and with not going too far. The advice given with the K'un Hexagram is concerned with being cautious and with working more from the background without taking over leadership.

*Sbe* : Does sex come into this ?

*He* : No, I think the *I Ching* had only men in mind and that it is considering the different types of character that people have.

*Sbe* : So, knowing the masculine and keeping to the feminine means it is better to be a listener than a creator.

*He* : We can't all be leaders, so for the majority of people it is probably true.

*Sbe* : What about the minority, the born leaders, the inventive creators ?

*He* : They are people with an inner urge ; they will do what they have to do. In any case I don't expect the *I Ching*, if they consulted it, would advise them to do otherwise. The rule for everyone would be the same : do not attempt what does not come naturally to you.

*Sbe* : What about the 'ravine'.

*He* : There is some explanation of this in other Chapters. In Chapter 6 we see :

The valley spirit never dies.

It is named the Mysterious Female.

And the doorway of the mysterious female is the base from which Heaven and Earth sprang.

*Sbe* : The Mysterious Female, then, is the Mother of the universe, the one who gave birth to it all.

*He* : That comes in Chapter 25.

Something undefined and incomplete,

Before Heaven and Earth,

In the silence and the void,

Alone and eternal,

All-pervading, unailing.

Perhaps it is the Mother of all things.

I do not know its name, call it *Tao*.

For lack of a better word I call it great.

*Sbe* : Now, how far have we got ? The valley spirit is another name for the mysterious

<sup>1</sup> Dr. D. C. Lan in "*Tao Te Ching*", Penguin Books.

female, who is the producer of Heaven and Earth and who, or which, can be known as Tao. The more I think about it the deeper it gets! Can I say of the valley spirit that it is a name for something undefined, eternal, all-pervading, unfailing, that it is the creator and that man can, in some way, become it? Why do they have such different names for it?

*He* : I expect that is one of the arguments for saying that the Lao Tzu book was not written by one person, but is a collection of sayings from different sources.

*She* : But even then the connection between them is not very obvious. How does the ravine or valley come to represent *Tao*?

*He* : The Taoist attitude to life 'Keeps to the feminine', it is non-aggressive, follows a lowly path, gets its way in the end. It is like water, which always flows to a lower level, can wear a gorge through the hardest rock and ends up in a valley. The valley is then considered as a never-ending source of virtue and power—incidentally that virtue or power is the *Te* of the *Tao Te Ching*, the Way and its Power.

*She* : Will it distract us from the argument if I quote a long saying I copied out some years ago, but I have forgotten wherefrom.

*He* : Not if it is relevant.

*She* : It is by a man called Tao Cheng from Nan Tso and was written in the Eleventh century.

Of all the elements the sage should take water as his preceptor.

Water is yielding but all-conquering.

Water extinguishes fire, or finding itself likely to be defeated, escapes as steam and re-forms.

Water washes away soft earth or, when confronted by rocks, seeks a way round.

Water corrodes iron till it crinkles to dust.

It saturates the atmosphere so that the wind dies.

Water gives way to obstacles with deceptive humility, for no power can prevent it following its destined course to the sea.

Water conquers by yielding; it never attacks but always wins the last battle.

The sage who makes himself as water is distinguished for his humility; he embraces passivity, acts from non-action and conquers the world.

*He* : That says it all!

*She* : But only about water. We haven't finished yet, what about this 'state of infancy', is it a child-like innocence?

*He* : Not quite. It really has the same meaning as the uncarved block.

*She* : That's not a very helpful explanation!

*He* : I thought the uncarved block might be easier to explain. The uncarved block is original, it has never been sawn out, chiselled; made into a utensil or to represent the shape of anything else: it is still itself. So the child is still itself: he has not yet had to conform to any imposed routine or discipline, his state is still an ideal one. He is still his own true self.

*She* : It seems to me you don't really explain these things, you just leave me to think them out.

*He* : If I could explain them it would only be my understanding of them. They might mean different things to you, and to any one else. If you really want to understand you must find out for yourself.

*She* : Oh. One last question. What about the white and the discoloured?

*He* : This is the saying that, it is suggested, has been split. It appears in two other places. The final chapter of the Chuang Tzu book is a study of Chinese thought and has a section on Taoist ideas. It says.

'Lao Tan said :

"Know the male but cling to the female,  
become a ravine of the world.

Know the pure but cling to dishonour,  
become a valley of the world."

In different English versions of the *Lao Tzu* book the word translated as 'discoloured' is also rendered as sullied, ignominy, humility, shame. In any case the oldest version of the saying is probably that given in the *Lao Tzu* book, Chapter 41. It comes there as a quotation from an even earlier collection.

The way that leads forward seems to lead  
backward.

The way that is even seems rough.

The highest virtue is the valley.

The sheerest whiteness seems sullied.

*She* : So, we end with a paradox.



# Sri Bhagavan and the Mother's Temple

By

Sadhu Arunachala

**B**HAGAVAN was deeply interested in the construction of the Shrine built over his Mother's Samadhi. He attended every function in connection with it, placing his hands in blessing on the various objects that were to be enclosed in the walls. At night, when no one was about, he would walk round and round the construction consecrating it. That he should take such a demonstrative part in anything has a very deep significance. It was extremely rare and has been doubted by many, but I myself was an eye-witness to these things and can vouch for their truth.

He took a personal interest in the cutting of the *Sri Chakra Meru* in granite (pyramidal form) which was installed in the completed temple and is regularly worshipped. This is about one and a half feet square and proportionately high. At the time of the *Kumbha-bhishekam*, on the penultimate night before the sacred water was poured over the images, he personally superintended the installation in the inner shrine. It was an extremely hot night and with three charcoal retorts for melting the cement adding to the heat, it must have been intolerable inside the airless cave of the inner shrine, but for about an hour and a half Bhagavan sat there telling the workmen what to do.

On the last night of the function he went in procession, opening the doors of the new Hall and temple and passing straight up into the Inner Shrine, where he stood for some five minutes with both hands laid on the *Sri Chakra* in blessing. I happened that night to be at his side the whole time; this was unusual as I deliberately avoided taking prominent part in



*Sri Chakra Meru*

such things, preferring to watch from the back. Strangely, something made me keep by him on this occasion and on account of this I was able to understand his deep interest in the Temple and especially in the *Sri Chakra*. It was because of this knowledge that I was instrumental after Bhagavan's passing, in persuading the Ashram authorities to institute the *Sri Chakra Poojas* six times a month. The explanation for this unusual action on Bhagavan's part may be found in the necessity that Siva must be always accompanied by Shakti. The world would stop otherwise. On the only occasion when such a Pooja was performed shortly after the dedication of the Temple during the life of Bhagavan, he refused to go for his evening meal but insisted on remaining a witness of it until the end. When someone remarked how magnificent it had been and it would be a good thing if such Poojas could be performed regularly, "Yes," replied Bhagavan, "but who will take the trouble?" The trouble is being taken now and it undoubtedly has the blessings of Bhagavan.

# The Vimalakirti Nirdeśa Sutra<sup>1</sup>

## Looking at Living Beings

Translated by  
Charles Luk

MANJUSRI asked Vimalakirti: "How should a Bodhisattva look at living beings?"

Vimalakirti replied: "A Bodhisattva should look at living beings as an illusionist does at the illusory men (he has created); and as a wise man looks at the moon's reflection in water; at his own face in a mirror; at the flame of a burning fire; at the echo of a calling voice; at the flying clouds in the sky; at foam in a liquid; at bubbles on water; at the (empty) core of a banana tree; at a flash of lightning.

"This is how a Bodhisattva should look at living beings."

Manjusri asked: "What should be his compassion (*karuṇā*)?"

Vimalakirti replied: "His compassion should include sharing with all living beings all the merits he has won."

M.: "What should be his joy (*mudita*)?"

V.: "He should be filled with joy on seeing others win the benefit of the Dharma with no regret whatsoever."

M.: "What should he relinquish (*upekṣā*)?"

V.: "In his work of salvation he should expect nothing (i.e., no gratitude or reward) in return."

M.: "On what should he rely in his fear of birth and death?"

V.: "He should rely on the power of the Tathagata's moral merits."

M.: "What should he do to win support from the power of the Tathagata's moral merit?"

V.: "He should liberate all living beings in order to win support from the power of the Tathagata's moral merits."

M.: "What should he wipe out in order to liberate living beings?"

V.: "When liberating living beings he should wipe out their *klesā* (troubles and causes of troubles)."

M.: "What should he do to wipe out *klesā*?"

V.: "He should uphold right-mindfulness."

M.: "What should he do to uphold right-mindfulness?"

V.: "He should advocate the unborn and the undying."

M.: "What is the unborn and what is the undying?"

V.: "The unborn is evil that does not arise and the undying is good that does not end."

M.: "What is the root of good and evil?"

V.: "The body is the root of good and evil."

M.: "What is the root of the body?"

V.: "Baseless discrimination is the root of craving."

M.: "What is the root of baseless discrimination?"

V.: "Inverted thinking is the root of discrimination."

M.: "What is the root of inverted thinking?"

V.: "Non-abiding is the root of inverted thinking."

M.: "What is the root of non-abiding?"

V.: "Non-abiding is rootless. Manjusri, from this non-abiding root all things arise."

<sup>1</sup> Chapter VIII: Published by: Shambala Publications, Berkeley, California, U.S.A.



# THE RIGHT TO FIGHT

*A Japanese story related by*

**Tera Sasomote**

*The Japanese are highly trained in the art of preserving inner tranquillity. This systematic cultivation of inner forces gives them a strange imperturbable quality best seen in the ability to carry on with work or other pursuits totally ignoring distracting situations like external noise.*

*The ideal of tranquillity has primarily a spiritual significance but when extended to ordinary situations yields highly beneficial results. Work becomes smooth and perfect.*

*The following story extracted from The Japanese Cult of Tranquillity<sup>1</sup> illustrates this principle, as applied to martial arts.*

*Iori Yagasawa is a youthful and highly skilled spear fighter, disciple of Gen-no-ju Yamawaki. He looks forward to the opportunity for a duel with the master since this is deemed a great honour. However the latter persistently denies him this on the ground that he (the disciple) is not yet in a perfected state of mind.*

**R**ESPECTFULLY Iori Yagasawa approached the master who was sitting quietly on his cushion, as was his wont, with his elbow resting lightly on the arm support. It had become quite still. Yagasawa knelt down to greet the old man, who, despite his seventy years, was a picture of health.

Iori's two hands were resting on the mat as he knelt before the master. 'Master . . .'

The 'old man with the silver beard' turned calmly towards his disciple. A gentle smile stole into his eyes as he asked: 'Well? The duel again, Iori?'

'Yes, Master. Forgive me for coming with it to you again. But I want to ask you just once more, just once: Agree to contest with me!'

'But, Iori, have I not told you so often? Do not press me!'

This was the fifth time since the beginning of the summer exercises that Iori had begged the master to contest. Each time the master, Gen-no-ju, had refused. He had always given Iori his will in everything else. But he had persisted in his refusal of the duel.

'Iori, a Samurai who knows his art must have perfect mastery of himself as well as his art.'

'Yes, Master, I am perfectly aware of this teaching.'

'Perhaps, Iori, but that is not as easy when one is young.'

'Forgive me, Master, if I contradict, but I always have your teaching in my heart. I act day and night in accordance with it.'

It was indeed true that Iori's conduct was such that no one could have said anything bad of him. No one could have accused him of any breach of the rules of the school.

'No, Iori, I do not overlook the seriousness of your efforts; it is indeed unusual how you . . .'

.....  
'Do not be so impatient, Iori. We will leave it at that — little while yet, not yet, Iori.'

In his own mind Iori was certain that, one day, he would receive the honour of duelling

<sup>1</sup> By Karlfried Graf von Dürckheim (Translated from German). Published by M/s, Rider & Co., London.

with the master if he continued in his endeavours to follow his teaching. Gen-no-ju was already old. Iori hoped and prayed that his dream would be fulfilled while the master was still strong. And so he tried again.

'Master, perhaps I am going too far, but I beg you not to refuse, if I ask you once more, if I ask you for the very last time to—'

Iori seemed determined not to give in.

'Well then . . .'

Gen-no-ju observed his determination and his despair; he had closed his eyes as was his habit in moments of great seriousness. Iori did not dare to breathe . . .

The servant girl entered without a sound and lit the lights.

Somewhere the autumn flies began to sing . . .

Gen-no-ju seemed to be in the throes of a difficult decision.

Then he opened his eyes calmly and said: 'If you are absolutely determined, I shall grant your request . . .'

'Master, thank you.' Iori's handsome face became suddenly hot and animated. Almost solemnly Gen-no-ju continued: 'But first . . .'

'Yes?' Iori's heart missed a beat.

'You must contend with someone else.'

Iori flushed crimson.

'With someone else? With whom?'

'With Tesshin, the hermit monk who lives in the precincts of the Genkuju temple in Tahara-machi Asakusa.'

Iori had been Gen-no-ju's disciple for six or seven years now, but this was the first time he had heard the name of Tesshin from the lips of his master or any of the other pupils.

'Tesshin from the Genkuji temple?'

'Yes, when you have vanquished him, I am ready to contend with you.'

'Thank you, Master, thank you.' In his excitement he added a little confusedly: 'What sort of a man is this Tesshin?'

'How can I tell you that now? Just one thing, Iori. Be prepared. He is no easy opponent. . . this Tesshin.'

A day after the master's agreeing to contend with him, on the condition that he had first vanquished Tesshin, Iori had sent a messenger to the priest. He told him the circumstances

and asked him to contend with him. As the priest's own room was so small and, besides, so many pilgrims visited the temple at Genkuji, he had invited him to come to him. But Tesshin had refused outright. He declared that he was a priest and had nothing to do with the arts of war. But Iori was not the type to give up easily. On the fourth request, Tesshin replied that he would at least come and see Iori.

'As I informed you through my messenger, I am only following the directions given me by my Master; I wish to challenge you to a duel with spears. I beg you to fulfil my request.'

Tesshin replied to this: 'I too have informed you through the messenger that I am a priest and therefore no fit opponent for you in a duel. I pray you to forgive me.'

'I respect your words, but it is my Master's direction. Do not refuse me and —'

'No, the days when I held a spear in my hands are but a dream of the past. Now they hold the holy rosary and are folded in prayer. It is quite out of the question for me to cross spears with a hot-blooded youth like yourself.'

Iori's blood began to boil.

'But I wish that you make an exception in my case and grant me —'

'I seem to perceive some artifice of the Master Yamawaki behind it all. I am sorry . . .'

It seemed pointless to argue. Now and again, however, Iori caught a glimpse of a mysterious light in the priest's eyes; but his bearing remained unaltered. Of one thing the youth was sure: the monk was mocking him. And to crown it all: Master Yamawaki and artifice! But even if that were so, it was not his present concern. The duel was the only important thing: he must break this insulting monk.

'You will agree without further argument!'

'No, a priest does not take hold of a spear!'

'Do you refuse?'

Iori could no longer contain himself: 'If you will not agree, I shall keep you here until you do.'

Without taking the slightest notice of Iori's outburst, Tesshin replied in the same gay



manner : 'You intend to keep me here if I do not accept your challenge?'

'That is just what I intend.'

'Then I accept it.'

This answer took Iori completely by surprise and he could only stammer : 'What, you accept?'

If this is how it is going to turn out, his hasty outburst was no mistake, Iori thought, as he said : 'Thank you, Master. Forgive me for being annoyed and disrespectful to you. But now let us get ready straight away.'

To this Tesshin replied : 'One moment. I accept your challenge. But I would like to warn you not to fight this duel.'

This, too ! Tesshin had not dropped his gay manner, but he was no longer smiling ; his eyes were flashing ; his whole demeanour had changed.

Iori cried enraged : 'What ! I am to give up the duel ? How strange. And might I enquire why?'

'Because the result is already clear ; why fight as well ?' All of a sudden his tone had become sharp and his words rough.

'The result clear?'

'You are no opponent for me.'

Iori was speechless with rage. The atmosphere was tense to bursting point, but Tesshin betrayed no emotion.

'If you wish to know the truth : even your Master Gen-no-ju cannot avail against me. I can estimate the ability of his pupil without having to fence with him first. How can you hope to vanquish me when even your master cannot do so? He broke into a loud laugh, 'Ha, Ha, Ha. . . .'

First accepted, then refused, finally made a mock of — Iori became red and white by turns.

Up to this he saw Tesshin as a priest who wished to humiliate him ; now he had changed. The strange flashing of his eyes — the spirit emanating from him ; he must be on his guard. Iori was beside himself. 'What impertinence ! Stand up and make yourself ready !' He gesticulated with rage. . . .

'Iori, it is senseless to try to contend with you.'

'Get up, I say !'

Iori reached over him for one of the spears which lay at hand.

'Wait, one moment,' said the priest.

'.....?'

'A wooden spear? No, take a real spear and attack me.'

'With a sharp spear?'

'Yes.'

So much the better, Iori thought to himself as he replied : 'This is just what I wish.'

He went to fetch the spear. When he returned, he was wearing a belt, a mask, and all the other usual protective clothes, and was carrying two spears under his arm. But the priest was not to be found. He searched the garden rapidly and found him sitting on the grass, in the same strange posture as in the house.

The autumn sun was sinking fast and throwing long shadows over the shrubs and the lake.

Iori was still beside himself with rage and approached Tesshin, throwing the two spears at his feet.

'Choose one of them'' he said.

'I do not need a weapon in order to fight with one such as yourself,' replied Tesshin, not deigning to glance at the spears.

His face twitching and deadly pale, Iori hissed : 'Wretch'' Any further reply seemed pointless ; and so he seized hold of one of the spears, threw back his mask and shouted : 'Here I come !'

The spearhead flashed, catching the last rays of the sun.

Tesshin rose without a word, and relieving himself of his upper garment with a rapid gesture, stood there, naked to his waist . . . For a moment Iori was at a complete loss ; his whole body shivered ; then he recovered himself and advanced. 'Hai' he shouted. But his voice sounded hollow. Only then did Tesshin turn towards him and look at him with eyes wide open. His head swinging to and fro, rolling, rocking, and his arms drawn in, he advanced slowly on Iori. A weird step like the dance of an octopus with one hundred tentacles. Iori could not find any position, not even the smallest point which would give him the advantage ; not even the tiniest hole imaginable was exposed.

Iori was completely overpowered ; there was but one thing for him to do : to retreat, step by step, one after another, in exactly the same

rhythm as Tesshin was advancing. He felt as though he were being choked. His spearhead trembled; a cold sweat broke out all over him, those eyes — those eyes — the trembling spearhead began to jerk up and down. Iori could bear it no longer — he must scream — admit his defeat — but his voice failed him.

The evening shadows grew longer; already they were covering the whole garden and gradually beginning to ascend towards the sky.

Iori felt like a puppet being pushed in all directions.

Already he was approaching the pond in his retreat, he began to lose consciousness and the dancing octopus became blurred.

'Iori! throw the spear away!' came a voice from somewhere, the voice of his father. His spear seemed to fall of its own accord from his hand. He fell on his knees, his hands on the ground in front of him, and he could only stammer: 'I am utterly defeated.'

Iori's father bowed politely to Tesshin and said: 'I do not know who you are, but my son is obviously no opponent for you. Allow me to thank you, in his name, for teaching him the lesson his presumption deserved.'

Tesshin drew on his garment again and answered: 'My name is Tesshin, I am a hermit from the temple precincts of the Genkuji temple in Asakusa. Forgive me for the spectacle. With a little more attention to exercise Iori will become an excellent spearman. Ha, Ha, Ha . . .'

\* \* \*

'Master.'

The next day, Iori, still pale from his encounter with Tesshin, knelt in front of Gen-no-ju and bowed deeply.

'O Master, your all-perceiving wisdom . . . yesterday Tesshin vanquished me utterly.'

Gen-no-ju closed his eyes slightly and said: 'So he vanquished you?'

'Yes, my skill is too poor to match one such as he.'

'Hm, it is ten years now since he became a hermit, but his skill seems undiminished . . .'

'Master, who is this Tesshin?'

'Tesshin?' Gen-no-ju looked into the distance. 'Tesshin was one of my pupils for about ten years, when I had first begun to teach.'

'But, Master, why is such a great spearman as he a solitary monk?'

'You see, Iori, it happened in this way. Like you, he had a natural flair. He had unusual skill, Iori. But he had no control over his feelings. He had a disagreement with an older pupil over some trifle; he challenged him to a duel and ran him through the body with a spear.'

'. . . . .?'

'He was filled with remorse and retired into solitude. We write to each other from time to time. He seems to have regained control over himself to some degree.'

Iori nodded to himself and said: 'Master, Tesshin said . . . ' and then he related the details of Tesshin's behaviour before the duel, even telling of how he said that the master Gen-no-ju was no match for him. 'Why did he say a thing like that?' he asked.

Gen-no-ju's white beard was like a wave, as he threw back his head and laughed. 'Did he say that again? He is a fool! Twice I have sent pupils of mine to challenge him and twice he said the same thing'

'. . . . .?'

'Iori — the very fact that you could let yourself get annoyed at his words shows that your feelings are not yet disciplined. And so you fell straight into his trap. You have not yet got proper control over yourself.'

The master's words sank deep into Iori's soul.

'Discipline is not concerned with skill nor form alone. How often have I told you that? That is the whole point. In your outward bearing you have achieved a marked degree of discipline. But I felt that you still lacked sufficient self-control, the great discipline of the emotions. That is why I did not let you contend with me yet.'

'Yes, Master . . . . . ' Iori's heart overflowed as he now understood his master's inimitable goodness.

'I am getting old, Iori. My strength is leaving me. You only saw my physical strength diminishing, only the visible sign of my age. And so you became impatient. True — there is a limit to visible strength . . . . . but to the others, Iori? As long as you can be ensnared by what meets the eye, you still



have a good way to go. Do you understand what I mean ?'

Iori was deeply moved and his voice shook as he replied : 'Yes, yes — it is only now that I begin to really grasp your teaching.'

'Hm, Iori, that is right.' And after a short pause he added : 'Soon, yes, soon enough you may contend with me.'

'Thank you, Master, but I feel I am far from being ready yet.'

Once more Gen-no-ju's eyes were lit up in a kind, soft smile.

'No, no, Iori, once you have understood this, it is sufficient. Let us meet soon.' And the master laughed contentedly.

Iori turned to one side ; he felt that something new and good had just been born in him — he went into the garden: His soul and his heart were utterly pure. He struggled against the tears which were just beginning to flow from his eyes.

The morning dew on the blossoms and the grasses at the edge of the pool glistened in the rays of the rising sun !

## LOVE

(After Kabir)

By Colin Oliver

Kabir says : I will tell you  
the secret of love.

The weaver does not weave it,  
nor is it grown in the fields,  
yet love is for sale in the market.

Go there now : king or beggar,  
anyone can afford it,  
your money stays in your pocket.

What do you exchange for love ?

Kabir says : lose no time,  
cut off your head  
and take love in return.

# NON-ATTACHMENT IN THE SMALL THINGS

.....

By

Marie B. Byles

**N**ON-ATTACHMENT forms the highlight of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Gospel Universal and that of Mahatma Gandhi. We should do the work that is ours without expecting to see the fruit of our labours. In Christianity, non-attachment is often spoken of as holy indifference, distinct from ordinary indifference. The Stoics of Greece and Rome spoke of it as playing the part that has been assigned to us by nature, whether that of a prince or a slave, whether it fail or is successful. Theosophists say that we are not the plaything of our senses but the Deathless and Eternal Light. Maharshi Ramana asked: "Who are you?" We are not that which suffers and enjoys what springs from attachments and prevents us from being conscious of the true Self.

This certainly presents us with a high ideal. But we can understand and admire the monk of the Ramakrishna Order who said that caring for the lepers was work for the Lord, for they got no thanks from the lepers.

We may understand what Marcus Aurelius meant when he said: "You have done a kindness and another has received it, why hanker after something more, the gratitude or the reward."

But when we probe deeper we find that non-attachment means far more than any of these things, far more than doing our work for the sake of the Lord or because it is our job to do it.

It is when annoyance or dislike arises in small matters that I have found it helpful to remember that it is a lifetime's job to acquire complete non-attachment.

Very helpful it is then to recall that it was only just prior to his death that Sariputta, the greatest of the Buddha's disciples, remarked

that at long last he could truthfully say that there was now nothing in the whole world whose coming into existence or whose changing or passing away would cause him grief. Ananda protested that surely if the Buddha were to die that would bring grief. Sariputta replied: "Not even that."

The passing away of the Buddha was a tremendously big matter, but Sariputta's words apply to everything, yes everything small as well as big.

It is said that we must love the sinner even while we hate the sin. But this is not non-attachment. If we have any likes or dislikes we are not non-attached. We are pitting ourselves against the one great unity of which we are part. Mahatma Gandhi worked unceasingly for the end of Untouchability, but there was never any emotional reaction, nor any "righteous indignation". He was wholly detached from what he regarded as evil. The basic teaching of Tenko San of Japan<sup>1</sup> is that the source of all evil (as well as good) is within ourselves and that we may seek to rectify it only by humble service rendered by ourselves to others and by blaming no one — that is, by non-attachment to our own self-esteem.

Non-attachment does not end by merely working without expectation of reward or thanks. It applies to everything in life, for without it, life consists merely of a series of changing likes and dislikes of trying to get what we like and get rid of what we don't. Generally these likes and dislikes are small, but it is amazing how large they loom when things do not go the way we want. If we find this, it means we must re-orientate our lives.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Mountain Path*, April, 1971, p. 89.



If we get a sore throat we have a feeling of intense dislike and at once go for the anti-septic bottle or whatever is our pet remedy. Or perhaps our neighbour is running his dirty waste water so that it flows onto our pleasant flower bed and kills the flowers. There arises antagonism towards the neighbour for his anti-social conduct and we want to alter his ways to our liking.

We take it for granted that we must make things go the way *we* want, not the way nature wants or the neighbour wants. We try to justify our conduct. A sore throat is illness ; we want to make the throat well so that we can do our work well. Dirty waste water can breed disease as well as spoil our plants. Who will say that we are wrong in our reasoning ? But in each case we try to justify our conduct so as to get our desire fulfilled. In neither case are we non-attached.

Likes and dislikes are merely opposite sides of the same coin. We cannot have one without the other. Neither can lead us to the Deathless Eternal as a matter of actual experience. Only non-attachment to either can do this.

Why do we get these likes and dislikes ?

Because, although the idea of non-attachment appeals to us, we cling far more strongly to getting our own way. And because we are still not really prepared to accept Sariputta's statement in its entirety.

We are still clinging to the wants and aversions of our individual self. But we cannot find the joy of living in the Universal unless we surrender our individual desires for the more abundant life of all.

And while we remember Sariputta's saying, we can also remember the saintly emperor, Marcus Aurelius, thinking of those little attachments that seem to be so large at the time. He said : " Pray not that you enjoy her caress, but that you give up your *desire* to do so."

And now let us face an even more unpalatable factor in non-attachment — **Hope**.

It is generally considered that hope is a virtue. But once again it is only one side of

a pair of opposites ; the other side is despair. And of the two hope is often the more dangerous. If we are in despair it is easier to turn inward and see that there is something more to be desired than anything of this world of time and space. But if we hope for better things, we are turning towards the things of time and space and continuing to cling to them and forgetting that our quest is for non-attachment to them.

To look " on the bright side of things " is of no harm if at the same time we are unperturbed as to whether the bright or the dark should happen along. There is nothing wrong with hope. But it may make it more difficult to find non-attachment. A welcoming attitude towards *all* that comes is the only thing that really helps.

When a friend of mine sprained her ankle, her reaction was, " Now what am I meant to learn from this ? " She looked up the medical book as to the proper treatment, but her first reaction remained. Or as Browning said :

Then welcome each rebuff  
That turns earth's smoothness rough,  
Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand,  
but go.

The secret of non-attachment lies in the word "surrender", a word frequently used by Maharshi Ramana. We must give ourselves unreservedly to the Light, the Kingdom of God which is within, give up the longing for the familiar world of likes and dislikes and plunge into the unknown. There still remains a last objection to the deeper meaning of non-attachment.

People may say : " Does it not mean callousness to human frailties and suffering ? " This stepping from the narrowness of the familiar world of likes and dislikes can only be understood by learning to live in the wideness of that more abundant life of the Universal. But perhaps the story of Dr. Mary Verghese may show it really leads to greater compassion, not less.

Mary Verghese was a promising young Indian doctor with perfect health and strength

and at the peak of her youth and potentialities. But a bus accident left her a paraplegic for the rest of her life. She became a leading surgeon. How did she do it? We may talk of her courage. But her biographer, Dorothy C. Wilson entitles the biography, *Take My Hands*. In other words Mary surrendered herself to her Lord regardless of self. She turned away from self, and in yielding to the Universal she found not merely a new life for herself, but compassion for all.

When we have surrendered ourselves we no longer need to worry about our bodily pains or disagreeable neighbours, and what we ought or ought not to do about matters. Just so far as we are not attached to what we meet with our senses, another power takes possession and directs us. But it is through non-attachment to the little things that we learn this and through looking also with an equal eye on both our failures and successes in non-attachment.

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## “If Stones Could Speak...”

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By

Wei Wu Wei

I am absolutely Subjective,  
I am subjectively Absolute.  
There is nothing whatever objective,  
about what-I-am as I,  
for, as ‘I’, I am-not.

Subject of all I survey,  
of every object in the sensorial universe,  
nothing belongs to me.  
For there is no ‘me’  
to which any ‘thing’ could belong.

Every sentient-being is what I am,  
for every sentient-being is I.  
There are no ‘others’,  
for myself is no ‘self’  
to know any ‘other’.

Since there is no ‘me’,  
there is no ‘you’.  
Since there is no ‘we’,  
all sentient-beings are what I AM,  
which is what the universe is as I.

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# MOTHER'S MOKSHA

By  
"A Devotee"

**G**RACE or Divine Shakti is indispensable in *sadbhava* and it was recognized by Sri Bhagavan in so many ways. It came, very fittingly, through the liberation of his own mother also. When he was living at Skandashram on the Hill, she came to live there and look after the small group of devotees who had gathered round him. Innocent and simple, she lived a life of service and devotion. By 1922 she had spent six years at the Ashram in preparation for her liberation.

In the last few years of her earthly life she fell ill several times. During such attacks of illness Sri Bhagavan attended on her with devotion and care. In fact, on an earlier occasion when she was critically ill he graciously composed the following prayer to Arunachala to cure her :

"Hill of Refuge that cures the ills of recurring births ! O Lord ! It is for Thee to cure my mother's suffering.

"O God that smitest Death itself ! My sole refuge ! Vouchsafe Thy grace unto my mother and shield her from Death. Who is Death if scrutinised ?

"Arunachala ! Thou blazing Fire of Awareness ! Deign to wrap my mother in Thy light and make her one with Thee. What need then for cremation ?

"Arunachala, that chasest away Illusion (Māyā) ! Why delayest Thou to dispel my mother's delirium ! Besides Thee is there any one who, with maternal solicitude, can protect the suppliant soul and ward off the blows of Destiny ?"

The mother did recover after this prayer and lived for a few more years. The prayer has a special significance. It is not merely indicative of Sri Bhagavan's love and high sense of duty to the mother, but has deeper



*Alagammal*

meaning as a means of liberating her from the round of births and death (*Samsāra*).

The end came on May 19, 1922. Devotees sat round, chanting the Vedas, Ram Nam and Tiruvāchakam (of Manikkavāchakar). By placing his right hand on her heart and his left on her head Bhagavan poured his grace on his mother till the end. As confirmed by Sri Bhagavan himself later, she attained Liberation at the moment of death. Bhagavan and a few others had not taken any food the whole day. Then at eight in the night, when it was all over, he rose and told the devotees : "It is over. Now we can take our food."

To quote from *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*, p. 201. :: Bhagavan was with his mother from eight in the morning till eight in the night. He himself said later that there was a struggle between himself and his mother until her spirit reached the Heart. Evidently

the soul passes through a series of subtle experiences and Sri Bhagavan's touch generated a current which turned the soul back from its wandering into the Heart.

"The *samskāras*, however, persist and a struggle is kept up between the spiritual force set up by His touch and the innate *samskāras*, until the latter are entirely destroyed and the soul is led into the Heart to rest in eternal Peace, which is the same as Liberation. "Its entry into the Heart is signified by a peculiar vibration.

"When Maharshi attended on Palaniswami on his death-bed, he took away his hand after the above signal. But Palaniswami's eyes opened immediately, signifying that the spirit had escaped, thereby indicating a higher re-birth, but not Liberation. Having once noticed it with Palaniswami, Maharshi continued keeping his hands over his mother for a few minutes longer — even after the signal and thus ensured her Liberation. This was confirmed by the look of perfect peace and composure on her features."

As tradition demands in the case of a Liberated Being, the body was not cremated but buried. No burial is allowed on the sacred mountain, so she was buried at its foot, adjoining the southern slope. A linga brought from the Himalayas was installed over her Samadhi and ceremonial worship of the same commenced.

It is about half an hour's walk from Skandashram and the Maharshi used to go there often. Then one day he stayed on feeling no inclination to return to Skandashram and thus *Sri Ramanasramam* arose at the foot of Arunachala.

A Shrine was built over the Mother's Samadhi and it was duly consecrated in May 1949 in the immediate presence of Sri Bhagavan.<sup>1</sup>

The temple of Mātrubhuteswara is in honour of the principle and institution of motherhood. In the relationship between him and his human mother is embodied the mystery of *bhedābheda*, of unity in difference, the bond which binds Sri Bhagavan and his devotees.

Jesus says: "I and my Father are one." Therefore, all men are the children of God. Sri Bhagavan implies: "I and my mother and all beings are one." In lavishing his grace on his mother, Sri Bhagavan emphasises the sanctity of motherhood. He can and will help us as he helped his mother. But there is one condition. We should faithfully follow his teaching, love him and serve him with total devotion as his mother did during her last six years.

On Mother's Day we celebrate not only the memory of Mother Alagammal, but also the role of Sri Bhagavan himself as the father and mother of mankind and the liberator of his devotees.

<sup>1</sup>For a detailed account, see Sadhu Arunachala's narrative (on p. 218 of this issue).

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One in All,  
All in One —  
If only this is realized,  
No more worry about your not being perfect !

— Seng-ts'an

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# The English Mystic: Richard of St. Victor

By  
Gladys Dehm

**A** CONTEMPORARY of Saint Bernard who died in the year 1173, Richard of St. Victor is known to be the first writer on mysticism who attempted to systematize mystical theology.

Richard of St. Victor employed a psychological approach, seeking to combine both the rational and the non-rational faculties. He taught that, on the road to Self-Knowledge, perception and thought have their place and role. He uses terms such as the shewing, and double unfolding, the latter dealing with both the beholder and that which is beheld. Where the intellect comes to a halt the state is termed Unknowing.

Among the writings of Richard of St. Victor are to be found the Benjamin Major and the Benjamin Minor. The 'Four Degrees of Fervent Love' is a shorter work, but it is one of great beauty. Here, it is taught in simple style that when a man has attained to the loftiest levels of contemplative life, he becomes the servant of his fellowmen, humbly serving them to the best of his ability.

## *The Four Degrees of Fervent Love*

To become more profound and speak with clarity, it is known that in the first degree the soul is athirst for God, in the second degree the soul is athirst to go towards God, in the third degree the soul is athirst in the Way of God. The soul is athirst for God when she yearns to experience the inner nectar which intoxicates the mind of man, when he first begins to partake and know the goodness of the Lord. The soul is athirst for God when she yearns to be lifted up beyond herself by the blessedness of contemplation and to behold her Lord in all His glory, so that she may declare: "For I have seen the Lord face to face, and my life is preserved. The soul is athirst within God,

when in an ecstatic state she yearns to melt into God altogether, so that oblivious of herself she may declare 'Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell'. The soul is athirst in the Way of God, when, impelled by her own will, not merely in temporal matters but also in spiritual ones, the soul surrenders completely to God's will relinquishing her own so that she may utter the words: 'I came not to do my own will but the will of the Father which is in heaven'."

In the first degree the soul receives God and she turns within. In the second degree the soul is raised up beyond herself, to God. In the third degree the soul, raised up to God, surrenders herself wholly to Him.

In the first degree the soul experiences a spiritual state of great sweetness, so that it is akin to having milk and honey upon the tongue....this is the heavenly manna which consoles those who leave the land of Egypt to receive sustenance in the desert; this is the concealed manna which is not known to man until he first partakes of it....

....in this state the shewing of the divine Effulgence enraptures the soul who retains an evergreen remembrance of this shewing, and who is not able to forget her joyful experience.

The soul, in the second degree, is so content with what she has tasted that both affections and thoughts become transfixed.

....the third degree of passionate love comes to a man when his mind is plunged into the depths of divine effulgence, causing the soul to become oblivious of outer things, unconscious of itself and possessing awareness only of God.

....those who have attained to the third degree of love, do not act of their own accord,

but rather commit everything to the will of God.

The soul seeks solely to please God. Just as the first degree hurts the affection and the second degree holds the thoughts, so does the third degree obstruct activity, so that a man cannot busy himself with anything unless drawn or driven by the divine Will.

....in this degree the soul prepares herself to obey God's will in all things, she gives herself with spontaneity to every divine request, her own will adapting itself to the heavenly command ; so does the soul humbly obey divine providence.

Whereas in the third degree the soul is sanctified, she becomes humbled in the fourth for the sake of God.

....in the third degree the soul, as it were, had laid down its life in God ; in the fourth degree she is lifted up to Christ. In the fourth degree the soul may truly declare : 'I live, yet not I, Christ liveth in me'.

....in the fourth degree the soul *knows* its immortality — a man cannot know death

who cannot be separated from the Lord. For it has been said : 'neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor night, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.'

.... in the fourth degree the soul 'beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things'.

....in this degree the soul may appear to have lost its reason, so intense is its zeal which is measureless and boundless.

....in the first degree the soul turns inward ; in the second degree it is raised to God ; in the third degree it goes unto God ; in the fourth degree the soul descends below itself. — in the first and second degrees the soul is lifted up ; in the third and fourth degrees the soul is transfigured.

....in the first degree the soul is turned inwards ; in the second degree the soul led elsewhere ; in the third degree the soul undergoes transformation and in the fourth degree the soul is 'raised from the tomb.'

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## The Joy of the Being

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By Kavana

May our silent whisperings  
Of the Night be caressed by  
The joyful Memory of the Day  
And why not ?  
Are we not surrounded by  
The Spirit which is within.  
We are not forgotten pennies  
Lying on the bottom of a pond  
We are the lovely Flowers  
Floating upon the eternal  
Waters of Love ; and our lives  
Are the fulfilling dreams of  
That which lies beyond  
"Life" and "death".  
This is our Remembrance,  
And our joyful hour of the  
Day.

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erase  
Face

in  
amazing  
grace

repa

# erase Face

## in amazing grace

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The world, YOUR world changes fast  
these days. You need a fast sure way  
into grace. It is yours for the doing.

RELEASE

FACE

IN AMAZING

GRACE

Sitting quietly  
or working hardly  
just release face  
including seeing-out-eyes,  
ears, forehead, jaw.

What have you done?  
Released YOU wholly.

I wrote and asked Wei Wu Wei, "How is the  
breakthrough (into LIGHT) accomplished?"

He replied as usual with too many words,  
"It is a lapse rather than an action. We need  
to *cease* looking *indirectly* (via relativity)  
conditionally, 'seeing' conceptual objects  
in mind, and — instead —  
to let looking. Look *directly*, I.E. subjectively,  
which needs no 'seeing', since there is just  
'this' 'here' 'now'. Who can 'break through'  
to where he is?"

Although pontifical and swirling in complex  
talk-talk I am glad to see he is beginning to  
write FUNCTIONALLY. Now re-turn to YOUR grace  
in face.

—paul rePS



# My Visit to Sri Ramanasramam

By  
Sarada

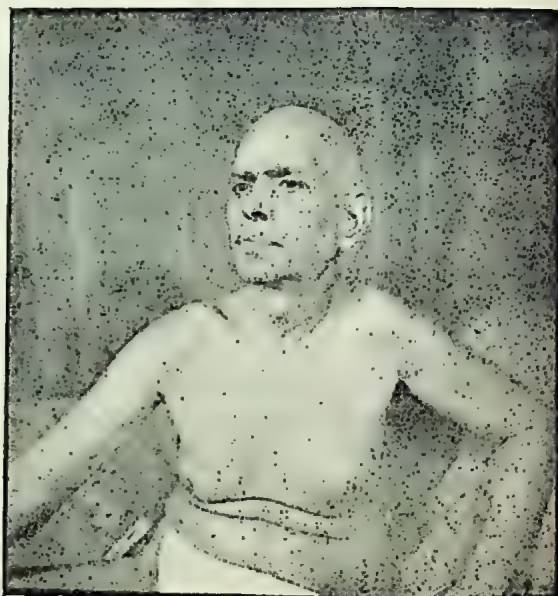
*The writer of this interesting account of her visit to Sri Ramanasramam is SARADA, a young girl of 14 (daughter of Sri A. R. Natarajan, Secretary of Ramana Kendra, Delhi). She is a very earnest devotee of Bhagavan and her renderings of Sri Muruganar's Songs on Bhagavan, with her mother and younger sister, are soulful and scintillating.*

**I** HAVE visited Arunachala ever since my childhood. I remember how at first I was attracted to the stone elephants at the entrance of the Ashram, the peacocks and the Samadhi of the Cow Lakshmi. During later visits to Sri Ramanasramam the affection for "Ramana Thāthā" grew into awe, respect and love for Bhagavan. Now, more than ever before, I have grown to love Arunachala and Sri Ramanasramam. Every successive visit one feels more and more drawn to Arunachala and to Bhagavan. Coming to Arunachala is like coming home.



Sarada

A visit to Tiruvannamalai brings one closer to Bhagavan. The whole place reminds one of Bhagavan ; it is almost as if he is physically present still in his Ashram. There are people



there who have lived and moved with Bhagavan ; they are full of stories about him. Listening to these vividly narrated stories, one feels as if one actually witnesses the incidents. It gives a feeling as if one hears his wit and sees his compassion.

Every time our visit begins happily and continues to be so till the very end. Only, the end, when it comes, is far from pleasant. I enjoy everything about Sri Ramanasramam, except leaving it !

On the second day of our recent visit to the Ashram we went on *giripradakshina*. Sri Viswanatha Swami also came with us and he

related numerous anecdotes, some entertaining and some elevating, but all interesting. One night, when an unlettered devotee was singing all by himself outside the Old Hall, Bhagavan heard him and sent for him. The man came in fearing that he was going to be reprimanded. Bhagavan, however, only complained jocularly that it was unfair of him to sing all by himself and asked him to sing in front of everyone. The poor man mixed up the words so badly that few could contain their laughter. Bhagavan also laughed heartily, and asked: "Could any professional singer have given us so much enjoyment?"

Sri Viswanatha Swami also related how a pair of sparrows, a male and a female, used to visit Bhagavan regularly. The sparrows would put in an appearance every evening and perch on the doors. Bhagavan would forbid people from closing the doors, although it was winter, saying: "They will come now and should not be shut out."

As we neared the Ashram, we were told by Swami how Bhagavan was often surrounded by the eager townspeople as he walked past the town. Therefore, upon crossing the town Bhagavan would say with relief: "Now we have reached our kingdom!" Needless to say, we enjoyed the *giri pradakshina* very much.

The next day we visited Skandashram and climbed down from there to Virupaksha Cave. There is an overpowering and majestic quietude about Virupaksha Cave. One can hear absolutely no sound inside the cave. It is a living and vibrant silence.

We met Sri Ramaswami Pillai also and found him to be a very genial and witty person, who was only too happy to talk about Bhagavan. He sang to us a few songs on Bhagavan and narrated some incidents. We talked late into the night and all of us were enjoying ourselves.

We visited Sri Viswanatha Swami in his room and listened to story after story. He was about to tell us an anecdote about Dandapani Swami when the Ashram lunch bell rang. He thereupon told us that he would resume the

narration later. We suggested that he might complete the story then itself. Then he reminded us how Bhagavan used to drop whatever activity he was engaged in, the moment the gong sounded, explaining that since they had been spared the necessity of begging for food, they should be punctual for meals. Sri Swami, therefore, completed the story about Dandapani Swami the next time we went to his room. Bhagavan, knowing that Dandapani Swami was nearing his end, gave him his touch of grace and spent a whole day in carving a huge staff for the big man.

Bhagavan used to grind rice and blackgram for *idli* every morning, while others performed the other kitchen chores. With a view to saving Bhagavan this labour, Sri Viswanatha Swami tried to complete it earlier in the night. Bhagavan noticed this for two or three days and said: "Should I not do some work in order to earn my food? Give me your clothes and let me wash them."

My childhood favourites, the peacocks, seemed to be in a wonderful mood this time, as there were a few showers which set them all dancing together. We noticed few monkeys at first, but they appeared after the showers.

Then came the unpleasant part of the visit, the time for departure. However, the thought that we would return soon and that is always with us, serves as a consolation. We recalled how on an earlier visit Sri Viswanatha Swami, seeing our unwillingness to leave, had pointed to the striking picture in the new auditorium hall and said: "Look! Bhagavan is standing there, with staff and *kamandalu*, ready to start on the journey with you!"

And so, we said our goodbyes to everybody, looked again into the Old Hall, the Samadhi, Mother's temple, Mahanirvana room and got into the car. For a long time, as the car moved on, we turned back for a last lingering look at Arunachala. As the hill began to fade into the distance, we twisted and turned our necks and managed to catch a last glimpse of the Hill through the tree-tops, a tacit promise of many such homecomings!



# ON LOVE

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By  
Christmas Humphreys

Not yet divine compassion, the immortal spring  
that crystal to the light shines clear  
beyond, above the clouds that veil mankind.  
Here's love, a warmth of heart suffusing mind,  
when healing hands are proffered, and each tear  
of self is dried with others' suffering.

All life is one, each body of it one  
in blood relation to each form alive.  
Wherefore we love, a fountain of unpurposed bow,  
a singing splendour of delight aglow  
with laughter. Fearlessly we love and strive  
with lovelit eyes to imitate the sun.

Lie down with suffering, for soon or late  
love will be with you there on velvet feet,  
with arms outflung and widening to enfold  
without possession, love that does not hold  
but deep suffuses, with emotion without heat  
and dares to smile into the eyes of hate.

Our love is various, for friends that move  
in sad grey circles of unconquered pain.  
Of mother-child ; of lovers close entwined ;  
All these shall sometimes look, and seeking find  
compassion, purged of heat and human stain.  
Until that day unceasingly we love.

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## STORIES FROM YOGA VASISHTHA—X

## THE STORY OF ARJUNA

Translated from Sanskrit by

M. C. Subramanian

**R**AMA said to Vasishtha : I have known everything that has to be known. I have clearly seen what has to be seen. However I am asking you again something in a light vein for the sake of clear understanding. O Brahman ! Please describe the eight-fold city (*purīyashtakam*), the glorious mirror which reflects these thousands of worlds.

Vasishtha said : Brahman, which being perfect has neither beginning nor end, is the seed of this world. When it is associated with nescience it is known as the individual self (the *jīva*). The *jīva* is really pure Intelligence and is free from nescience. The *jīva* proliferates in this body and becomes very active. The 'I'-thought makes it the ego. By thinking it becomes the mind. When it ascertains (the nature of its experiences) it becomes the intellect (*buddhi*). When it cognizes (objects) it becomes the senses. When it thinks it is the body, it becomes the body. When it thinks it is a pot it becomes a pot. The *jīva* who thinks all these things is the eight-fold city. Under its influence people see dream after dream. All these dreams are unreal. In the same way they see this world. O Lotus-eyed Rama ! Arjuna, the son of Pāṇḍu is going to realize this<sup>1</sup> (in the *Dvāpara Yuga*) and become detached and attain liberation even while alive. He is going to lead a life free from misery. You can also live like him.

Rama asked : O Brahman ! When is this Arjuna, son of Pandu, going to be born ? And what kind of detachment is Vishnu going to teach him ?

Vasishtha replied . At the end of a four-fold *yuga* (aeon), Lord Yama (the god of death) will practise austerities for expiating the sins incurred by him in tormenting the

souls after their death. He will practise them sometimes for eight years, sometimes for ten or twelve years and sometimes for five or seven or sixteen years. He will then be quiet as it were, and would not kill any being in any world. The world would thereupon become filled with living beings who would swarm the earth like flies round an elephant in rut in the rainy season. It would be impossible for any one to move about. The Devas would take several measures to destroy these living beings and reduce the burden of the earth. Thousands of *yugas* would pass in this manner and there would be many worlds and an infinite number of beings. She (the earth) would then seek refuge with Vishnu in order to get rid of her excessive burden. He would incarnate in two forms, one as Vāsudeva (Sri Krishna), and the other as (Arjuna) the son of Pāṇḍu. The sons of Dhritarāshtra and all their relatives would come to fight a terrible battle with Arjuna, who, on seeing his own people about to die, would become despondent and refuse to fight. Vishnu would then enlighten Arjuna with suitable arguments so that the work on hand might be carried out.

He would say to Arjuna : O Lion among Kings ! Remember the Self which is infinite, unmanifested and without beginning, middle or end. You are unborn, eternal, pure Consciousness free from all blemish. The Self is neither born, nor does it ever die, nor, having been, does it ever cease to be. That unborn, eternal, abiding, primeval Being is not slain when the body is slain. Steadfast in Yoga and without attachment, do your duty. Let your work be an offering to Brahman. You will soon find yourself to be Brahman. Offer everything to the Lord, look upon the Self as the

<sup>1</sup> Vasishtha is able to see the future.



Lord, be free from all cares. Be the Lord who is the Self of all beings and the resplendent jewel of this world. Give up all thoughts, be equanimous, tranquil and silent. Practise the Yoga of renunciation (of the fruit of action). Do your work but do not brood over it.

Arjuna would then ask Vāsudeva : " Lord ! What are the distinguishing features of detachment, offering everything to Brahman, renunciation in the form of offering everything to God, Knowledge and Yoga ? Please describe them one by one so that I may get over my great delusion."

The Lord would reply : " The state in which there are neither thoughts, nor objects of thoughts nor desires is Brahman. The efforts made to attain that state are regarded as understanding (Jñāna) and Yoga by the enlightened. Realisation of the fact that the entire world as well as the one Self is Brahman is known as offering to Brahman (*Brahmārpanam*). The renunciation of the fruit of action is regarded by the wise as *sannyāsa* (true renunciation). Not thinking about anything is detachment. Looking upon the entire objective world as God and not seeing anything other (than God) is offering to God (*Isvarārpanam*). Fix your thoughts on Me ; be devoted to Me ; worship Me and bow down to Me. Indeed (thus) you will reach Me who am the Self.

" O spotless Self ! know that I have two forms (aspects), the relative and the absolute. In my relative aspect I have hands and feet and bear the conch, the discus and the mace.

In my absolute aspect I am without beginning or end, untouched by misery ; I am called Brahman, the Supreme Self and so on. So long as you are unenlightened and have not realized the Self you must worship me as a god with four arms. Such worship will in due course make you enlightened and you will realize my Absolute, aspect which has neither beginning nor end. Thereafter you will not be born again. The undeluded, those who are free from pride and ignorance, who have overcome the evil of attachment, who are devoted to the Self, who have turned away from desires and are entirely beyond the dualities of pleasure, and pain, attain that imperishable state. One whose understanding is free from desire and whose activity is purified by the flame of wisdom is called a sage by those who know. Be free from all pairs of opposites and ideas of acquisition and preservation. Be established in the transcendental state of the Self. Adapt yourself to circumstances and adorn the world. Even if the Vindhya ranges were to quiver or terrific storms were to blow, a wise man would not swerve from the path delineated by the Guru and the scriptures. O good soul ! It is because of one's ignorance of the Self that desires arise. When one realizes the Self and becomes enlightened desires cease to rise."

When the Lord of the three worlds speaks these words, the son of Pāndu would sit silently before him for a moment. He would then, like a bee in a lotus, say : " Just as the sun makes the lotus bloom, your words have enlightened my mind. The burden of all my sorrows has dropped off from me "

(To be continued)

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The Mind is said to be twofold :  
 The pure and also the impure ;  
 Impure : by connection with desire ;  
 Pure : by separation from desire.

— Maitri Upanishad

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# THE AIM OF INDIAN ART

By

Dr. C. Satyanarayana

THE cultural contribution which India has made to the history of mankind is substantial and vast. The basis of Indian culture is Indian Art, and *vice versa*. According to Vātsyāyana there are sixty-four arts; the Jain texts state that they are seventy-two in number. *Lalita Vistara*, (a well known life of Buddha which has been followed in the sculpture of Borobudur, Barhut, Amaravati, and Nagarjunakonda) states that the number of arts is eighty-six.

The learned texts and ancient tradition included, under the term Arts, handicrafts as well as fine arts. Hemachandra states that art is 'human creation' (*silpa*) based on a comprehensive perception and understanding (*vijnana*). In *Amara Kosha* art stands for *silpa*. Vatsyayana, in his *Kāmasutra*, says that art means learning (*vidyā*). In Rig Veda, art (*kalā*) means each one of the sixteen parts of the Veda. The term *kalā* (Art) found in the Vedas refers clearly to the branches of learning.

In *Mahābhārata* it is stated that Shiva taught Ganga the sixty-four arts. In the tenth chapter of *Bhāgavatam*, it is stated that Krishna and Balarāma learnt the sixty-four arts in sixty-four days, under the sage Sāndepa.

We shall now consider, in particular, Architecture, Sculpture and Painting.

The history of these arts dates farther back than the written history of the Indian Nation. Harappa and Mohenjadarō, sites of two cities excavated some years ago, are the only survivals of the most ancient period of art now available to us. These excavations enable us to have a peep into what may be termed the Golden Age of Indian Art, a perfection that could only have been achieved over several centuries.

Mohenjadaro and Harappa were cities of the Indus Valley civilization. This civilization can be dated back to the third millenium B.C. Mohenjadarō means 'City of the Dead'. Here have been found houses built in orderly fashion, well laid-out roads, an excellent underground drainage system, all based on well-developed principles of architecture and hygiene. Right in the centre of the city was a tank, described as the 'Great Bath', for the bath of purification called *Avabhritha snāna* after the performance of a Yaga. Water was filled into it and baled out. There are signs to show that there were excellent sanitary arrangements, including soakpits, suggesting a civilization highly refined and complete.

Among the many noteworthy features revealed by these excavations are these: stone sculptures, seals, statuary, terracotta figures, jewellery of intricate designs, bronze statuette representing a remarkable figurine of a dancing girl, enormous bulk of steatite seals of excellent craftsmanship, and amulets, the engraving on which receives ready explanation from some of the Rig Vedic hymns. One of the seals contains a figure of Rudra as Mahayogi, seated amidst animals such as the bull, elephant, rhinoceros, tiger, antelopes, and also men, birds and fish. It brings out forcefully the ideas contained in the Rig Vedic hymns. Each one of the articles, whether of clay, stone or metal, displays excellent workmanship. Mohenjadarō reveals a glorious civilization and supreme art over five thousand years old. The planning of these two towns is breathtaking. The sculpture is in an excellent style. For instance, the two statuettes (torsos) from Harappa have revolutionized earlier notions of Indian Art. All art-critics have declared that for pure simplicity and feeling there is nothing to compare with these two masterpieces, even in the Golden Age of Hellas.



The painting on the pottery found here shows that the artists had grasped fully the essential elements of form and decoration. No other paintings, fresco or mural, have been found, but it is likely that there were some other paintings as well which have not withstood the ravages of time.

A close study of the scheme of pictographs and scriptographs on the seals found here suggests that it is here that we should look for the parentage of the later-day Brāhmi script.

The finds at Harappa and Mohenjadarō throw valuable light on the origin and nature of Indian Art. If even these few specimens, so many thousand years old have such definitive forms, we may infer that the origins of Indian Art go far back to an age beyond the reach of known history. Thus Indian Arts had a hoary past and a Golden Age as well.

Before we go on to trace the development and evolution of Indian Art, let us try to understand the Indian ideal of art, the source whence the Indian artist gets his message. Rabindranath Tagore states that 'art is the response of man's creative soul to the call of the Real'.

Art is the result of man's original or primordial spiritual aspiration. The purpose of art is to explain the inner, hidden significance of life in order to help man realize the fullness of it. Man needs food, clothing and shelter no doubt and he can even exist without art. But what kind of life is it? Often in order to preserve and protect bare life, one may temporarily neglect or discard the arts for a time. But it is only the arts that have enabled man to blossom into what he is. Man's irrepressible and unconquerable desire to understand and reveal finds expression and fulfilment in art.

What glimpses we have of the art of primitive man is gathered from his implements. He fashioned his implements not merely to serve his practical needs but also to satisfy his love of beauty, and in so doing, he displayed exquisite skill. Why did he do so? There was an innate urge in him to see the beauty in the

implements he made. He had come to a stage where he can visualize and contemplate beauty. He took great pleasure in looking at the skilfully wrought hilt of the sharp instrument he used in his work. With each new shape he gave to his cooking and drinking vessels and the weapons of his livelihood, his fingers acquired a new skill and a new dexterity. His eyes feasted on the products of his skill and mentally he was satisfied. Body and mind, the senses, physical and mental, experienced a joy. Every race in the world has gone through this experience.

To immortalize himself, primitive man carved out figures of his own self and eternalized himself on the rocks and hills. On the trunks of trees he drew lines that represented his shape, he made figures of himself out of wood and figures of clay; he fashioned images after himself. Thus, on rock, in wood, stone and clay, we find the primitive man satisfying a primordial urge to immortalize himself by drawing or making images of himself.

In the sphere of painting, sculpture, and architecture, the artistic vision of the Indian had reached a high standard. All the cultural heritage of India has sprung from the arts of India, and the perfect experience of the Indian nation is embodied in its art. Art is as much a necessity for the Indian way of living as food is for life. For the Indian artist art is sacred; it is a form of worship, it is the practice of 'Dharma' (Path of Duty), it is the path of yoga, and it is the way of salvation (*Mukti*).

Art has established an intimate, inseparable, and indispensable contact and relationship with his search for Truth and God; so intimate, that art itself has become one of the ways of seeking God.

The aim of Indian art is to show the relationship between *Paramātmā* (*Puruṣa*) and Nature (*Prakṛiti*). The metaphysical law of Indian Art is the result of a process of distillation, constituting pure wisdom. Its logic and wisdom, which are its philosophy, are original; they were not confused or adulterated by other civilizations. But that does not mean that the wisdom and knowledge of the Indian are intolerant or lack the

ability to absorb and synthesize the truths arrived at by other races.

From adjacent lands invaders came to India and with each invader there came new ideas and new social customs. All these ideas and customs were integrated with the life of the Indian, and these new customs became fresh media through which the search for truth found a new and rich expression. Thus, though on the surface, it may appear at first that the Indian imitated other cultures, ultimately Indian culture absorbed and synthesized all these within itself. It is these customs that came to be influenced by Indian culture — their outward forms were retained or modified but their inner content expressed the cultural ideals of India.

In ancient India they did not have any museums of art. Ajanta was a great University, Taxashila was another, and so was Nalanda. Ellora was a centre of pilgrimage. Thus, these ancient seats of learning and places, of pilgrimages were the centres of art, but not museums of display. The ideals which inspired the artists and which they assimilated and portrayed sprang from their philosophy. Their philosophy finds expression in their daily habits and observances. It permeates and embraces the very structure, the backbone of the Indian Nation. This philosophy is not merely academic ; it is a part of daily life, embedded in the traditionally accepted and established practical rules and rituals (*sampradāya*) that form a part of the Indian artists' daily life. The Indian artist sought his ideals in, and drew his inspiration from, his way of living. His daily habits and rituals enabled him to grasp the nature of the soul. When he grasped the idea that the nature of the soul was eternal and that the soul was at the root of all things in the world, he had created the

soil and the milieu in which Indian Art was to grow in stature and attain a majesty that was unique.

It is sometimes said that Hindu art has been influenced by Greek or Roman art, this is Gāndhāra art, and so on. But Indian art had attained its maturity and definite character long before the rise of Greek civilization. The goal of Indian art is the liberation of the soul that is, salvation during life (*Jivānmukti*). The Indian artist reflected in and through his art the Nation's ideal and his own experiences ; he expressed truth.

While expressing the permanently established spiritual truths in his art, the Indian artist did not forget the environment of man, the material surroundings amidst which he lived. He has depicted strongly their unity in his art ; that man was part of creation, an organic part of it, that he himself created and played a part in creation. All living beings, be they of animal or vegetable origin, were manifestations of one life. That is why he chooses his motifs from the creepers, flowers, animals, and mountains like the Himālayas, that is, the whole of creation, matter, nature (*Prakriti*). He identified himself with nature in all her manifestations and moods.

It is to indicate the union of matter and life, Nature and spirit (*Prakriti* and *Purusha*), that the Indian artist created the symbol of the union of two complementary and indispensable beings in man and woman. Nature is in the form of woman. Creation is the characteristic of Nature (*Prakriti*). The whole universe has come out of *Prakriti*, it is at the root of all the material and mental things. *Purusha* is light (*jñāna*). It is shapeless. *Purusha* is the complement of *Prakriti*. All nature changes for the sake of *Purusha*.

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“The Mother Divine is beauty in the physical form, power in the subtle form of life, enjoyment in the mental and experience of Yoga in the *buddhi*.”

— Uma Sabasram, XX-9.

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# How I Came to the Maharshi

By

Bhupati Raju Narayana Raju

The following is an interesting account by the writer of his spiritual pilgrimage which started with intense *japa yoga* and which ultimately led him to Sri Bhagavan's Feet at Arunachala. He is an earnest devotee living in the Ashram atmosphere, utterly dedicated to *sadhana*.

**I** COME of a Rajput clan, who, campaigning long back in the South, settled down near Bhimavaram in Andhra Pradesh. My father was a staunch devotee of *Sri Rama* and so were my brothers. We are all Vaishnavites.

Born in 1906, I got married in my seventeenth year. But I kept away from my wife, spending my time in agricultural work, writing '*Rāma Nāma*' crores of times and studying *Ramayana*, *Bhagavatam* and the lives of saints. And so I went through accounts of Bhagavan Ramana appearing in the weekly Telugu magazines with profound interest. I had a narrow escape from tuberculosis in 1929. When all treatment failed, I got completely well in three years by mere dicting, taking only orange juice and milk for food.



Sri Rajugaru



As my wife was a very innocent and good person, I thought it cruel to shun her and so lived with her for a few years. A son was born to me in December 1940 and I had to take care of him until he grew up to manhood. Thus I got entangled in *samsāra* for some years. Then I decided to leave home for good to dedicate myself solely to spiritual life. I made a pilgrimage to the North visiting Badrinath in 1968. It was possible for me to come to the South only in November, 1972 when I had *darsan* of the Krittika Deepam at Arunachala. Then I decided to stay on for good at Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai.

I went home for final leave-taking. On November 4, 1973, I left my home at 4 a.m., visited Sri Venkateswara at Tirupati on the 5th and reached Sri Ramanasramam on the evening of the 7th. After a few days spent in

the Ashram, I arranged a place outside for my permanent stay.

I get a succession of thrills going through the life and teachings of Bhagavan Ramana.

I now live on only fruits, milk and *iddlies* got from the Ashram. I go round the Hill as often as possible and 108 times daily around Sri Bhagavan's Samadhi Shrine. I have decided to spend the rest of my life at the feet of Sri Bhagavan.

I have, by the grace of Bhagavan, got freed from all entanglements and attachments. While my greatest regret is that I have not had Bhagavan's *darsan* during His life-time, I am more than satisfied by visions of Him and a growing sense of His eternal Presence within my heart.

## *infinite mirror*

By

Kavana

One can conceive anything

excepting Life

Life can only be lived

... can you become conscious of more

than your own consciousness

in being aware of the infinite...

of the "I" in the infinite

of IT in the infinite

of All in the infinite

the idea

the word

the image

the first stimulation

i am *That*

the *i am*

the *IS*

a no-conception

ONE





*Sri Mathrubhuteswara Temple at the Ashram*

## Kumbhabhishekam<sup>1</sup> at the Ashram

### Consecration of Mother's Temple

By  
Suri Nagamma

THE Vaidiks (Priests) who were invited by the Asramam obtained the permission of Bhagavan early morning on Sunday the 13th March, 1949 to perform the Chandi Hōmam and the worship of *Navakanyakūs*. On Monday, the 14th which was the Full Moon day, thousands of people gathered at the Asramam as it was announced that the preliminaries for the *Kumbhābbishēkam*, such as Pūja of Vighneswara, would begin after the night meal. The Asramam presented the appearance of Kailās (Heaven) with brilliant electric lights everywhere. Pictures of Siva's dance-poses were tied around the shed of the Vaidiks and the Pandits. The roads were crowded with shops on either side. The Pandal was decorated with strings of green leaves; and the Asramam was resounding with instrumental music.

It was past 8 p.m. The music stopped. The chanting of the Vēdas could be heard from the

side of the cowshed. Wondering what it was, I looked that side and saw the Vaidiks following Bhagavan from the side of the cow-shed to the temple where pūja had already begun.

After Bhagavan came and sat down on the sofa, another batch of Vaidiks chanting Vedās, brought in Sri Sankarāchārya of Pūri who had come here two days earlier; they seated him on a special sofa by the side of Sri Bhagavan.

After that, hundreds of Brahmins sat at a distance from Bhagavan in rows and began filling the whole atmosphere with the music of the chanting of the Vēdic Hymns. It is no exaggeration to say that it exceeded the grandeur of even the durbar of Brahma. The radiant face of Bhagavan, who was seated under the starry sky was radiating a cool lustre all around. People were spell-bound at

<sup>1</sup> performed on 17-3-1949.

the sight. It appeared as if the lustrous Linga of Lord Arunachala himself had assumed that shape.

The son of the Sarvādhikāri, T. N. Venkataraman, came there accompanied by his wife and with Brahmins walking in front in a procession. The fruits and flowers that were brought with them were placed at the feet of Bhagavan. Venkataraman then prostrated before Bhagavan and after obtaining the permission of Bhagavan to begin the ceremonies sat on a wooden seat. After that, Vaidyanatha Sthapati — the Sculptor — came there with his attendants and prostrated before Bhagavan, obtained Bhagavan's permission and went away. Subsequently, the Vaidiks and the Ashramites came one after another, obtained Bhagavan's permission and began the ceremonies with the worship of Ganapati. On completion of the worship, Venkataraman and his wife prostrated before Bhagavan and left.

Soon after that, Bhagavan got up with the 'Pūrnakalāsam' (a pot full of water) and, with a procession of Brahmins chanting Vedic Hymns, he came to the hall constructed as a *Mukhamandapam* (raised platform in front of the new temple), opened the doors leading into the temple as a symbol of the opening of the temple. Thereafter he went straight to the Samādhi where the Linga is to be installed as also Mēruprasthāra Sri Chakra, touched them, examined them, went round the temple examining everything and then came to the hall in front of the temple.

At that place a specially carved stone sofa had been placed for seating Bhagavan. In the centre of the sofa there was a lotus, in the back the 'Pranavam' ('Om') and on either side two lions. On the four legs of the seat there were carvings representing some of the Avatārās. All of them were painted with a golden hue. The Asramam authorities wanted to seat Bhagavan on that stone sofa not on that day but on the day of the 'Kumbhābbishēka'. That was why there was no bedspread on the sofa. All expected Bhagavan to examine it merely and come away but he sat on the sofa unexpectedly. All were astonished. They prostrated before him. After



a while Bhagavan started from there, and went into the shed erected for Sri Chakra Yāga, and there touched all the vessels. At about 10 a.m., he came back to his usual place in the Golden Jubilee Hall.

After 2 a.m., in the night, *Kalākarshanam* and *Ghatasthapanam* were performed. The Chandi homam was begun and was performed according to Sāstraic rites in the sheds of the Vaidiks. Similar rituals were performed in the Āgama sheds also. Thus in all the several places the respective gods were invoked, the vessels with sacrificial waters were installed and the Hōmas were begun. Besides the Hōmas, four Vēdas were being chanted by four different groups of Vaidiks. The music of the Vēdas was pleasing to the ear and created an atmosphere of serenity, reminding one of the atmosphere of ancient Ashrams. Besides these, there was a recital of the *Dēvi Bhāgavatam* also.

On the second day, Homas were performed in the same manner. Between 7 and 10 in the morning, and between 5 and 10 in the evening, Yāga Pūja was performed. The same morning the cows in the Gōsāla (cow-shed) were



brought to the temple where the pūjas were being performed, their horns were decorated with turmeric powder, kumkum and flower garlands and a Linga was tied between the horns of one of them. After the Linga had dangled for a while between the horns as a part of the ritual the cows were sent back and the Linga was taken in a procession to the temple to the accompaniment of instrumental music and the chanting of the Vēdas. After Pradakshina, the Linga was taken inside. Subsequently the images of Yōgāmba, Vighnēswara and Kārtikeya were taken in the same manner.

On the night of the second day between 10-30 p.m. and midnight, the *Meruprasthāra* Sri Chakra was installed in the niche behind the Linga by Bhagavan to the accompaniment of the chanting of Vedas. After that, devotees chanted the appropriate Mantras and placed the Meruchakra in its proper place where the nine gems were inset. There was another golden Sri Chakra which was to be placed under the Linga and sealed with gold. As that would cause delay, at the request of the devotees, Bhagavan merely touched it and came back to his original seat. The remaining images were installed by others subsequently.

During the early morning of the third day, the *Kalākarsana* ceremony was performed. Thereafter the various images were fixed in their respective places which were studded with *Navaratnas* (nine gems). The stone sofa which was specially prepared for Bhagavan referred to earlier was likewise studded with nine gems.

The most important of all the ceremonies was performed on the fourth day. Hearing the instrumental music as early as 2 a.m., I got up and went to the Asramam and found the whole place full of people sleeping on the floor. There was no space even to walk along. As the music was played at different places, the people who were asleep woke up slowly. As all the Yāgas had been performed for three nights and were ended, the other rituals like *Suvāsini Pūja*, *Sparsābuti* and *Pūrṇābuti* were

performed. On the morning itself the *Kalaśas* (water pots) were placed in the temple with appropriate rituals. Subsequently the priests carried on their heads the *Pūrnakalasam* with chanting of Mantras, went round Bhagavan and with his permission climbed up to the top of the temple. Bhagavan sat on the sofa and all the devotees prostrated before him. After that was done he was taken into the shed where the Yāga was performed, was made to sit on a chair and the tower of the temple was sanctified with the sprinkling of holy water. Thereafter Bhagavan was brought to the interior of the temple and was made to sit on a bench before the Nandi and then Abhishekam was done to *Mēruprasthāra* and to the *Māthrubhūtēswara* Linga.

After this *Mabakumbābbishēkam*, Bhagavan resumed his seat. Niranjānānanda Swāmi, who was responsible for all the festivities, was garlanded and honoured in the presence of Bhagavan. In the evening at 4, the Ayurvedic Doctor, Bangalore Ramachandra Rao gave a lecture in the presence of Bhagavan about the utility of *Kumbhabhishekams*, how the twigs used in the Homa contain rare medicines and how when they were burnt with Mantras all diseases of the lungs get cured by the inhaling of the fumes. That is why, he said, elders have ordained us to perform the Yāgas.

In the evening at 5.30, Dr. K. Vijayaraghavan gave a music recital. In the night after 8 p.m., *Mabābbishēkam* was performed. A troupe of Tiruppugal singers, performed Bhajan all the four days in the presence of Bhagavan and also at the Yagasalas. There was no limit to feeding the poor on all the three days. Special arrangements were made with the help of the police and volunteers for this. Bhagavan went round with his attendants during the feeding to have a look at it. A film was taken of all the festivities. The festivities came to a close with the usual concluding Mantras. As the work in the hall in the front of the temple was not over, Bhagavan came back to the Golden Jubilee Hall the same night.

# Garland of Guru's Sayings

By SRI MURUGANAR  
Translated from Tamil by  
Prof. K. Swaminathan

527.

Which is the measure measuring or revealing  
The Being-Awareness shining in the heart  
Whose light alone reveals all measuring,  
Measure, measurer and things measured ?

528.

Only so long as there is a measurer  
Do measuring and things measured seem  
to be.  
But when the measurer sees the Self  
Of Being and gets lost in It,  
All other things along with him  
Perish and fall together.

529.

The jiva's thirst will vanish only  
When the *vasanas* of the frenzied mind  
Die and direct experience comes  
Of pure awareness.  
If mirage water could quench thirst  
Then indeed would knowledge indirect  
Satisfy the jiva.

530.

True, non-dual experience  
Of the Self supreme as pure Being  
Is called 'Knowledge not-indirect'  
False, dualistic ignorance too is called  
'Knowledge', qualified as 'indirect',  
Even as *raksbasas* are called "the  
virtuous".

531.

From questing inward in the heart  
Comes knowledge certain which destroys  
All false illusions. Searching books  
For pure, clear wisdom is like trying  
To cook and eat the picture of a gourd.

532.

Can one's hunger be appeased by eating  
Food cooked over a painted flame ?  
The end of pain, the bliss of peace,  
Results from egoless awareness,  
Not at all from verbal wisdom.

533.

Never through argument, but only by  
Abiding as Awareness in the heart  
Whose light illumines and shines within  
the mind  
Can one enjoy the thrill and throb,  
The bliss supreme of being the Self.

534

May the wise and valiant, holding  
That there is but one *jiva* alone,  
Grow firm established in the heart.  
To meet halfway minds not mature  
They speak as if *jivas* were many.

Note : 'They' may mean 'the wise' or 'the  
Sastras'.



535.

Consider well and answer please :  
 Who is born [and stays in bondage]  
 And who has slit the web of birth  
 [And gained mukti] ? When the 'I'-thought  
 Has not arisen [as in sleep],  
 Are there any 'others' whether  
 Body-bound or free ?

*Note* : Bondage and liberation are both illusions.  
 It is not as if there are many *jivas*, some  
 bound and some free.

536.

O worldly folk who long for and run after  
 An endless series of unending objects,  
 'Tis wisdom true to seek and know  
 That one thing on knowing which  
 All other things will cease to be.

537.

For those who see with insight keen  
 The subtle truth, what is there to gain  
 From knowledge of material objects ?  
 What the imperishable inner sense  
 Perceives surpasses far the sights  
 Seen by the corporeal eye.

538.

Knowing aright the nature of the Self  
 And abandoning the non-Self as unreal,  
 Void, is wisdom true. Clairvoyance,  
 Clairaudience and such other knowledge,  
 Mystifying merely, is ignorance,  
 Not awareness.

539.

None of the sports of Shakti can exist  
 Apart from Shakta, Shiva, Self.  
 'Tis the mischief of false *maya* to regard  
 This universe as different from Awareness  
 And be bewildered.

540.

The feeling that one is but the body is  
 Delusive and destructive Ignorance.  
 One sure device to cure it is to know  
 That even this Ignorance cannot exist  
 Apart from the Inescapable awareness  
 Which is one's real Self.

541.

Space is but one unbroken whole,  
 Yet foolish folk suppose and then  
 Behold it cut up variously.  
 Even so 'tis *maya*'s outcome strange  
 That people have a way of speaking  
 Of the one sole Self as if it were many.

542.

It is ignorant folly to behold  
 The Self, the sole Reality,  
 As many and varied. Hence, whatever  
 Name or form you see,  
 See it but as the Self, the ground  
 Of Being alone.

543.

In all this varied universe  
 Of multitudinous appearances  
 The inner substance is but one,  
 As in the millions of *til* seeds  
 Poured into the miller's press  
 The one true essence is the oil.

544.

In the clarity of pure Awareness,  
 The depth of peace that is abidance  
 In Being as the Self without a second,  
 No such duality exists  
 As knowing and not knowing.

# THE TRUTH

## As It Is

By

G. Ramaswami Pillai

**G**OD has given us all that we need for leading a happy and helpful life. He also guides us from within until we get established in the One Self of all. Yet on account of the dense ignorance of an inveterate ego, we go the wrong way abusing the rare gifts and opportunities afforded to us. It is high time that we understand our deplorable plight and try our best to mend matters and redeem ourselves. "Heaven helps those who help themselves".

Though we believe in the Presence and Grace of Bhagavan we do not seek him with all our heart and soul. If we are earnest about it, we shall surely get in direct contact with him, commune with him and be incessantly blessed by him. When we really love him we become one with him, we realize our identity with him.

### *The Path of Self Enquiry*

The most effective and direct way to know the Self is not to think at all but to look within for the source of the ego, the thinker. This may appear at first difficult and baffling, but, once started with earnestness and faith in the Master's words, it will soon be found that no path is easier. Bhagavan has given us this assurance in his Song, *Atma-Vidya*, "Self-knowledge is very easy, Lo ! it is the easiest of all paths for getting over the bondage of Karma and the misery of birth and death".

The so-called 'I', the ego is the first of all thoughts. It is body-consciousness, the concept 'I am so and so'. What matters is not its definition, but the search for the reality behind it, the source, the origin of it. It was not there during deep sleep. Where could it have been then? It should have been lurking somewhere to rise up again to continue its activities on our waking up from sleep. The ego is a spurious blend of Pure Awareness and the inconscient body. It seems to be there only so long as its identity has not been enquired into. And so the pseudo-self, the ego, vanishes for ever as a result of unrelenting, constant enquiry and the real Self shines forth in all its clarity as Pure Awareness devoid of the subject-object phenomena. This is the unique method of Self-enquiry taught and made easy for us by Bhagavan Ramana. By following this Path we shall find ourselves as the eternal Reality beyond the three passing states of waking, dream and sleep.

As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as the ego to be got rid of. There is nothing else but the effulgence of the transcendental Reality of the Supreme Self. This is the truth of the non-dual Self revealed to us by Bhagavan.<sup>1</sup> The greatest discovery of our times is that the so-called ego is nothing but a myth, a mirage, a shadow of shadows, a non-entity.

<sup>1</sup> In *Ekātma-Panchakam* (Five Verses on the One Self (of all) his last utterance and other Works.



# Glory of Arunachala

## Arunachala Mahatmyam

Translated from Tamil by

M. C. Subramanian

### CHAPTER XVII

#### THE MARRIED LIFE OF SIVA AND PARVATI

**S**UTA said to the rishis : When Nandikesvara asked Markandeya whether he wished to know anything more the latter replied : Deva of Devas ! We have heard from you what has to be heard. Still I and the sages (*rishis*) are eager to know how the great goddess Parvati performed austerities (*tapas*) here.

Upon this Nandikesvara said : Oh Sage Markandeya ! I shall tell you what I know about that also. Listen. You know that the Supreme Siva had earlier married Sati, the daughter of Daksha who is the goddess of all chaste wives (*Satis*). You have also heard that, when Daksha acted maliciously towards her husband, she flew into a rage and threw herself into the sacrificial fire. You also know how, at the command of Siva, Virabhadra then appeared on the scene and, after beheading Daksha and others and obliterating Daksha's sacrifice, chastised Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and other gods, knocked out the teeth of Surya, broke the arm of Agni and insulted Aditi and the other divine mothers. Sati was born again as the daughter of Himavān (the Himalayas) under the name of Pārvati or Umā. Once when Pārvati was alone with Siva in the Sthanu forest, doing some personal service to him, Kāma (the god of love) went there with the object of making Siva enamoured of her. But Siva burnt him to ashes with his World-destroying Fire (*Kālāgni*). When Pārvati found that Siva's senses were completely under his control she proceeded, with her companions, to a mountain peak and, by performing austeri-

ties, pleased him. Siva then married her and lived with her in solitude. Goddess Rati (the wife of Kama) who was mourning the death of her husband prayed earnestly to Pārvati who thereupon performed austerities at Kamapitha and restored him to life. Afterwards Pārvati's mother Menā and her father, the King of the Mountains, took her to their home. But even there she was always thinking of Siva.

At that time there were two demons (Asuras) named Sumbha and Nisumbha who had performed many austerities and obtained from Brahma a boon which made them invulnerable to the attacks of Devas, Asuras and human beings. Vishnu and all the Devas were afraid of them. They prayed to Siva who comforted them, saying : "Fear not. There will be peace in due course. These two demons will be slain". After giving this assurance he, the destroyer (of the worlds), returned to the inner apartments and continued to dally with Pārvati. One day when he was in a mood of endearment he called her 'Kāli' (a dark-skinned woman). At once she cast off her skin and threw it away. The place where it fell became the holy Kāsi. The skin itself turned into a goddess named Kausiki. This goddess performed austerities on the Vindhya mountains and, while doing so, killed the two lustful demons. Pārvati too performed austerities and succeeded in acquiring a golden complexion. She came to be known as Gauri (fair-complexioned). Siva was pleased with her. In course of time she gave birth to two sons Gajānana (Ganapati) and Skanda (Subrahmanya). Great souls say that they are Brahma and Vishnu who had been born thus for expiating their sins. The two boys, always very active, grew up

under the kind care of their father whom they bound to themselves with bonds of love. Their parents enjoyed themselves sometimes with the *vina* and (other musical instruments), sometimes with pictures, sometimes with games and sometimes dallying in water. Once Pārvati got upon the lap of Siva who had lost a game and bent the (crescent) moon (upon his head) into the form of a bangle for her. In this manner Siva and Parvati enjoyed themselves for a long time among the Meru and other mountains.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### PARVATI SERVES THE LORD OF ARUNA

Nandikeswara continued : While Siva and Pārvati were thus leading a happy life, Pārvati one day saw Siva, whom she had pleased with food and drink, sitting under a mango tree with eyes shut and hands clasped together. She thought : "He is thinking of another woman and deceiving me. How is it possible to probe into the deceitfulness of men ? While pretending to adore me, he has been deceiving me". Getting very angry she said to herself : "I must perform austerities and gain his unchanging love. Once he opens his eyes he will not let me go. I must go before he opens them". Resolved so, she went away without his knowledge. She did not stop even when her companions tried to prevent her. Thereupon her five companions Kalāvati, Mālyavati, Mālīni, Vijayā and Jayā followed her.

They wandered over several mountain ranges and forests, visited many sacred springs and temples and at last reached the Drāvida country at the foot of the Sahya Mountains. They crossed the Pennai river. Pārvati then said to Vijayā : "See, there is Arunagiri in the distance. On its slopes are situated asrams of those who are practising austerities. They are beautiful and holy and are famous for their protective powers. Let us go and look at them. I wish to see them". Her words

aroused the curiosity of her friend. At this moment Pārvati saw an asram on the path leading to the hill thick with luscious trees. Buffaloes, monkeys, and wild animals were roaming about there freely. Spiders had woven their webs in many places. On the banks of the streams and pools used by the sages for their bath, herds of elephants and wild boars were seen. There were also birds, serpents and rats. All the creatures moved about fearlessly. Smoke from sacrificial fires rose up over the trees. Cuckoos chanted the hymn addressed to god Rudra, crows cawed *stotras* (hymns of praise) and parrots sang the Sāma Veda. Tigers and cows moved about side by side. Elephants sported in the waters and splashed the trees.

Pārvati saw there a sage practising austerities in a secluded spot. He was sitting under a *saptaparna* tree on a splendid tiger-skin covered with sacred grass (*darbha*). He was sitting in the posture known as Virāsana. His body was smeared with sacred ashes (*vibbuti*) and his hair was red and matted. His look was directed to the tip of his nose. He was clad in the bark of a tree, had a string of *rudrāksha* beads in his hand and was moving his lips gently (in prayer). He looked imposing like an evening cloud over a mountain. His sacred thread looked like a noose for trapping and destroying all imperfections.

Pārvati approached him and spoke to him reverently asking him : "Who are you and what is this hill ?" He replied : "This is Arunāchala, the most glorious sacred place on earth. I am Rishi Gautama and I am practising austerities here for attaining liberation." When he learnt from her companions that she was Pārvati, he made his obeisance to her and invited her to his hut of leaves and offered her rare fruits and edible roots. He guessed that she wanted to practise austerities for the welfare of the world. So he narrated to her the glory of the Column of Splendour from beginning to end as far as he knew.

(To be continued)



# BOOK REVIEWS

**SELF-REALIZATION THROUGH LOVE:** By I. K. Taimni. Pub.: Theosophical Publishing House, Madras-20. Pp. 79. Price: Rs. 6.

The Bhakti Sutras of Narada have been rightly considered to be a profound classic in the Bhakti literature of the Indian tradition. The treatise enters straight into the heart of the matter by defining devotion as intense *love* for God. The love bores a tunnel as it were through the hard crusts of our nature in ignorance and opens a channel for fruitful communication with the object of our adoration. It is the direct way to the Being of God. All other ways, those of Knowledge, of Works, of self-discipline, culminate in this Love for the Divine. Dr. Taimni discusses these and allied themes in his brief commentary on the aphorisms which he has translated into English. Though the work is not on par with his treatise on the Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali, it is a helpful introduction to the subject. His warning to the aspirants against allowing devotion to centre itself exclusively on human gurus is apposite. His other warning against self-complacency when *bhakti* enters a state of self-delight and ecstasy is also to be kept in mind.

Citing an instance of unification of consciousness with the Divine from the Bhagavata, the author narrates: Sri Krishna disappears from the side of Radha and leaves her in an agony of separation. Radha runs from place to place in the woods of Vrindavan and asks every Gopi whom she meets about the whereabouts of Krishna. But the question she asks is not, 'Where is Krishna?', but 'Where is Radha?' (P. 26).

**THE BUDDHISM OF TIBET AND THE KEY TO THE MIDDLE WAY:** By Tenzin Gyatso. Pub.: Allen and Unwin, London. Pp. 104. Price: £ 3.50.

In this authentic exposition of Tibetan Buddhism, the Dalai Lama refutes the popular notion that pure Buddhism got corrupted in Tibet into what is called Lamaism. He cites the considered opinion of scholars that what has been obscure in the old Sanskrit texts is found to be clarified in their Tibetan translations.

He narrates the history of Buddhism, its spread to Tibet, the main truths of the Teaching, the paths of Hinayana, Mahayana and Tantrayana. He de-

votes considerable part of the work to the practice — lower and higher — of Buddhism and analyses the various stages of the fulfilment. He is brief but satisfying. He writes: "The Sutra portion of the Blessed One's word is incorporated in the three scriptural divisions . . . according to their subject matter: the discipline (*vinaya*) is concerned with ethics (*sila*); the class of scripture (*sutrantā*) with meditative stabilisation (*samadhi*); the knowledge (*abhidharma*) with wisdom (*prajna*)."

"Cyclic existence is divided into three types by way of different types of abodes; these are a desire realm, a form realm and a formless realm. In the desire realm, beings partake of the pleasures of the 'five desirous attributes': forms, sound, odours, tastes and tangible objects. The form realm has two parts: in the lower, beings are not attracted to external pleasures but partake of the pleasures of internal contemplation. In the higher part, beings have turned away from pleasurable feelings altogether and partake of neutral feelings. In the formless realm all forms, sounds, odours, tastes and tangible objects and the five senses for enjoying them are absent; there is only mind, and beings abide only in neutral feeling, one-pointedly and without distraction."

The note on Tantrayana, particularly the *anuttarayoga*, is specially interesting.

**THE DAWN OF TANTRA:** By Herbert Guenther and Chogyam Trungpa. Pub.: Shambala Publications, Berkeley (USA). Pp. 92. Price: \$ 3.50.

This joint work of Dr. Guenther and Chogyam Trungpa is an interesting study in the different approaches of European scholarship and Tibetan tradition to a common subject — Buddhist Tantra. Explaining the distinction between Hindu Tantra and Buddhist Tantra, Dr. Guenther states: "The emphasis in the Hindu tantra is on a way of doing, creating. The Buddhist tantra with its theory of *prajna*, appreciative discrimination, having equal status with *upaya*, action, has quite a different emphasis. For one thing, the Hindu term *shakti* never appears in Buddhist texts. Those who say it does can never have seen the actual texts. But the idea of *shakti* is of paramount importance in the Hindu tantra." May be, the term *shakti* does not find mention in those texts, but the concept of *Shakti* is certainly there in the Mahayana texts. Again

there are schools of Hindu Tantra in which the Shakti does not have a "paramount" importance.

Abbot Trungpa is instructive on the subject of meditation: "From the Buddhist point of view, meditation is not intended to create relaxation, or any other pleasurable condition, for that matter. Meditation is meant to be provocative. You sit and let things come up through you — tension, passion or aggression — all kinds of things come up. So Buddhist meditation is not the sort of mental gymnastic involved in getting yourself into a state of relaxation. It is quite a different attitude because there is no particular aim and object, no immediate demand to achieve something. It is more a question of being open." That would answer to the passive meditation in Indian Yoga.

The authors define and elaborate upon the concepts of Bodhisattva, Kalyanamitra, Acharya Mushti, Nirvana, Mandala, the three *kayas*, the *kriya* tantra, *carya* tantra, *yoga* tantra and *mahayoga* tantra. The discussion proceeds in the terminology of the western psychology, obviously because these papers were presented at conferences in the United States.

**THE DEFINITIVE TAROT :** By Bill Butler. Pub. : Rider and Company, London. Pp. 251. Price : £ 4.50.

A good deal has been said and written about the efficacy of the *Tarot* which is a game of specific picture cards with an evident symbolism. Traced to the 12th or 13th Century A.D., in its beginnings, the numbers of the cards, their significance and use have undergone periodical changes. The author of this treatise has done commendable research, built up a credible account of the history of this system indicated both its possibilities and limitations in the field of divining the future. He warns that the method is passive and the sub-conscious mind of the querent can play tricks. A reliable guide book to those interested in the subject.

**THE GITA :** By Shyamsunder Jhunjhunwala. Pub. : Auropublications, Auroville, Pondicherry. Pp. 270. Price : Rs. 20.

Of all the major writings of Sri Aurobindo, the *Essays on the Gita* have been the most popular. He discusses in these Essays, chapterwise, how the Gita has been a purposeful synthesis of the several traditions that had been in vogue at that time and underlines the equal importance of the paths of Knowledge, Works and Love in the spiritual evolution of man. He shows how the *ksara* and the *aksara*, the mutable and the immutable, find their reconciliation in the Purushottama, the supreme Transcendent. He emphasises the spirit of comprehension with which

the Gita approaches the problems of life in the world and makes every detail of life significant to the growth of the soul Godward. But not all can benefit from these two bulky volumes. It is for these that the present publication is designed. It contains the text of the Gita, with Sri Aurobindo's renderings in English (compiled from the *Essays*) and apposite extracts from the Commentary wherever necessary. The Editor has added helpful notes of his own, a glossary and references making the whole work a useful book of reference, study and thought.

An authentic addition to the Gita literature.

**IN THE OPEN :** Poems by Colin Oliver. Drawings by Alex Rolft. Pub. : Shollond Publications, Nacton, Ipswich, England. Pp. 29. No price quoted.

A beautiful book of sixteen poems on varied themes with simple but living drawings. The topics are from everyday life as also from more profound areas. To illustrate : *Seven Sayings* : I will show you/what is seen without eyes,/heard without ears./I will show you/what hand has not touched,/hidden in the heart of man.

Or, Peace is the station/where one waits/but with nowhere to go/and where/the grain/of a bench runs/like rails through/incredible countries.

The author communicates the experience.

M. P. PANDIT.

**THE SAGE OF VASISHTA GUHA — The Last Phase :** By Swami Nirvedananda. Pub. : The Author, Village : Kurtha, Ghazipur-233 001. Pp. 56. Price : Rs. 4.

This small book is a sequel to the author's previous work, "Life of Swami Purushottamananda" under the pseudonym "A Disciple", and narrates the last two years of the Swami. Our country has been the birth-place of saints and seers who constantly strove to raise the spirituality of the people. Swami Purushottamananda spent the major years of his life in the Vasishta Guha near Rishikesh and attained mahasamadhi in 1961. This book reviews the last phase of his life and the several incidents that took place then, like his tour to the South and the several incidents illustrating his compassion and other spiritual qualities.

**THE NINE PRINCIPAL UPANISHADS :** Translated by Swami Kriyananda as taught by Swami Satyananda with text, transliteration and notes. Pub. : Bihar School of Yoga, Monghyr. Pp. 188. Price : Not stated.

All the main upanishads with the omission of the two great Bhadaranyakas and Cāndōgya are trans-



lated here in English with brief notes at the beginning of each upanishad. These notes give a general account of the upanishads. The diacritical marks have not been fully utilised and this may make the reading of the text a bit difficult.

**BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS :** By Anthony Elenjmittan. Pub. : Better Yourself Book. Pp. 147. Price : Rs. 5.

**THE DHAMMAPADA :** Translated with an introduction by Anthony Elenjmittan. Pub. : Institute for Inter-Religious Understanding, Bombay-400 50. Pp. 77. Price : Rs. 3.

The first volume "Buddha's Teachings" includes also the text of the Dhammapada as translated by the learned author from the original Pali. As the author himself states, this book is intended more for the general reader who wants to have some general idea of Buddhism and its main teachings and this the book succeeds admirably. Without being very abstruse and pedantic the author succeeds in giving the main tenets and practices of the Buddhist faith. The Parables and the section on the Trisaranas give the main import and are quite enough for all practical purposes.

The Dhammapada like the Gita and the New Testament is too well-known to almost every one. "It is the greatest ethical scripture and humanistic code of good life." While not being very literal the translation succeeds in being eminently readable and at the same time does justice to the original. In page 142 in "satyameva jayate nanrtam", the latter word is wrongly printed as 'na narutam'.

The book succeeds in the objective outlined by the author in his introduction and is a good addition to the non-technical Buddhist literature.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

**THE FURTHER SHORE :** By Abhishiktananda. Pub. : I. S. P. C. K., Post Box 1585, Delhi-6. Pp. 120. Price : Rs. 10.

**PATHWAYS TO LIBERATION :** By Pearl Drego. Pub. : "The Grail", C-47, South Extension II, New Delhi-49. Pp. 176. Price : Not indicated.

The significance of the ancient tradition of renunciation, reminding one of the Christian Desert Fathers is brought out in clear, perspicacious terms by Swami Abhishiktananda (Mon. Henri Le Seux in *purvasram*). The various "concessions" and deviations, which have gradually crept into later religious and monastic life are thrown to the winds here, and the reader is introduced to the genuine brand of "sanyasa", a total abnegation of the self,

which is "beyond all names, all forms, even all dharma."

The first essay on "Sannyasa" was the author's last writing, published in the *Annual Bulletin* of the Rajpur Retreat and Study Centre in 1973, revealing the Swamiji's inner fervour, which consumed him to his very depths, calling him inevitably to an ever growing acosmic life. Readers familiar with the Swamiji's earlier writings would have noticed that in his book on "Prayer" he had pleaded for an authoritatively Christian renunciation to be in tune with the Ultimate Church as the crowning glory of monastic life. It is stated that "sannyasa" was his last word before being carried off in his final awakening to the Great Light beyond all worlds.

The second essay, "The Upanishads — An Introduction" is an appropriate supplement, as these great outpourings belong historically to a great period in the mental and spiritual development of mankind, bearing witness to one of the profoundest awakenings of the human spirit, which marks a turning point in history. In such a divine enthusiasm was born Christianity too, being a similar outpouring of the Spirit. The author obviously belongs to that rare band of ascetics who have discovered "the further shore", the Reality, of which everything "on this side" is simply a sign, like footprints which lead one to find everything.

\* \* \* \*

Clearing the various misconceptions prevailing today over Yoga, Pearl Drego, a follower of the Grail Movement, "discovers" yoga as a way of growing towards truth and as a path to spiritual liberation that demands a concrete arrangement of feelings and actions. He closely follows the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali in his exposition of the theme, and like Abhishiktananda is able to draw the similarity of teachings underlying Christianity and Hinduism in their pathways to liberation; for as he observes :

"Ishwara has some of the aspects of divinity that are important to a person's belief at a certain stage of spiritual growth but which have later to be outgrown. Christ as human is also one who shows the way, but Christ as divine is the Light within. This inwardness of the Christ-experience comes nearer the yogi's experience of the Self. The eight-fold path leads on to the full experience of samadhi, the Realisation of Pure Consciousness. The experience of Christ leads on to the inexpressible Being of the Father, the Ultimate Divinity."

It is the author's firm conviction that the more personal discoveries in both yoga and Christianity can best be shared in a face-to-face situation on

which the meanings behind words and values are understood more clearly.

**SEVEN GREAT RELIGIONS:** By Annie Besant.  
Pub.: The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar.  
Pp. 274. Price: Cloth Rs. 10; Paperback Rs. 5.

**ASIAN RELIGIONS:** By Geoffrey Parrinder.  
Pub.: Sheldon Press and distributed by Affiliated  
East-West Press, Madras. Price: £ 0.95.

**THE GOSPEL OF ISLAM:** By Duncan Greenlees.  
Pub.: The Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar,  
Madras-600020. Pp. 202. Price: Cloth Rs. 14.50;  
Paper Rs. 7.

Great efforts for the spiritual welfare of the world are being made as is evident from the spate of books on religion coming out of the press and the missionary propaganda carried on throughout the globe. While any definition of religion may limit the extent, range and depth of human aspirations to grope towards the light of the Eternal, there is no denying the fact that religious search down the ages has been toward wholeness and unity as against separateness, divisions and fragmentation. No wonder the word "religion" itself is coined from the Latin root "legere" meaning "unite".

Annie Besant's lectures on the various religions of the world, although delivered more than eighty years ago at the annual Theosophical conventions, still ring modern as they are very much in tune with contemporary thought. She had surveyed each religion—seven of them, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism—in the light of occult knowledge, both as regards its history and its teachings. They are interpreted in the light of Theosophy, for every religion is regarded as coming from the one great Brotherhood, the custodian of spiritual knowledge, which sends out its messengers periodically to give out the truths suitable to the needs of the times. The repeated editions of this valuable handbook only prove that age has not dimmed its lustre or worth, but it continues to give the message of peace, purifies man's life, elevates his emotions and comforts him in sorrow.

Geoffrey Parrinder on the other hand tries to dispel the belief that all religions are essentially the same by emphasising the variety of beliefs and practices in Asian religions. Confining his attention to "the living and literary non-Christian religions", he traces their historical backgrounds and gives some account of their scriptures and religious life. He considers Christianity, although springing from Asia,

as non-Asian, as it has developed largely outside Asia. There has been for some decades a tendency among writers on religion to suffer from any one of these heresies: Darwinism, Frazerism, Freudism and Marxism. Parrinder has endeavoured to battle against these heresies and present the genuineness and significance of some of the religious experiences of several of the followers of the Asian religions, such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism and Shintoism. This is a clear and brief guide to these Asian systems of thought, offering no snap judgments but preferring the facts to speak for themselves, as the opening sentences testify:

"Islam is the religion founded by the Arabian prophet Muhammad. The name Islam means surrender, or resignation, to the will of God. From the same verbal root comes the name of Muslim: given to the one who has surrendered to or received the religion."

\* \* \* \*

Duncan Greenlees in his *The Gospel of Islam*, however, points out that Islam does not derive from the Arabian prophet but is only a restatement of the natural and primeval religion of the world, dropping the accretions that time brings in to corrupt it from age to age. According to him, the path of Islam consists in "Devotion to God his Maker; kindness and justice to all his fellow-creatures; prayer and service going hand in hand."

This book is not a translation of the Koran, but only an introduction or guide-book to the Scripture itself, whose arrangement does not make quick reference easy for the layman. The author has chosen typical and striking passages from all parts of the Koran under different topics and woven them into a logical sequence. The chapter and verse given in brackets at the end of every paragraph helps the reader to refer to the original text of every passage selected. If to the Muslims this book serves as a convenient summary of most of the essential teachings of their Faith, to the non-Muslims it will be a corrective to the false ideas of Islam so often spread by its enemies, thus promoting communal harmony alround.

**SRI NILAKANTA'S PRASNA TANTRA:** Translation by B. V. Raman. Pub.: Raman Publications, "Sri Rajeswari", Bangalore-20. Pp. 264. Price: Rs. 13.50.

Of the three distinct divisions of Hindu astrology, namely, horoscopy, Muhurtha and Prasna, the last is the most fascinating of the ancient and hoary science. It is based on a chart prepared with reference to the moment a question is asked, orally or in writing. Although a great deal of skill and intui-



tion is required for interpreting hoary charts, this branch is simple involving less work than the others. Further, there is the added advantage of knowing the precise moment when the question is asked unlike in recording a birth-chart, when there are more chances of error creeping in. Failure in prediction must be due to several factors such as incorrect data, or want of sufficient knowledge of the astrological principles or lack of the power of interpretation on the part of the astrologer.

It is interesting to note that at the outset the author, Nilakanta Daivajnya, who lived in the sixteenth century, lays down the preliminary requisites for correct prediction :

"The predictions of one well-versed in the ten kinds of calculating planetary longitudes and proficient in astrological lore cannot go wrong. In the hands of men of learning, culture and humility successful results are alone possible."

Divided into four chapters, the book deals comprehensively with the subject and B. V. Raman's translation is excellent, being a liberal rendering of the verses interspersed with notes. This hoary science is based on the principle that every mental event such as the formulation of a precise question about one single matter, in which the querist is strongly interested, is similar to the gestation of a child and when the question is asked, it moves from the mental to the physical world even as a child is born. Hence the principles of natal astrology are equally applicable here. This science is best utilised in locating missing articles or persons, in making minor decisions and also in suggesting hopes when everything looks bleak ; for is not astrology meant to give hope to the despairing ?

**MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING — AN INTRODUCTION TO LOGOTHERAPY :** By Viktor E. Frankl. Pub. : Better Yourself Books, 28-B Chatham Lines, Allahabad-2. Pp. 144. Price : Rs. 5.

Aristotle's definition of man as the worst of all animals, "for injustice is more dangerous when armed, and man is equipped at birth with the weapons of intelligence, and with qualities of character which he may use for the vilest ends. Wherefore if he has not virtue he is the most unholy and savage of animals, full of gluttony and lust" comes to mind as one reads Dr. Frankl's painful book. Here he explains the excruciating tortures experienced by him as a long-time prisoner in Nazi bestial concentration camps where he was stripped to naked existence. His father, mother, brother and his wife died in camps or were sent to gas ovens. Yet this psychiatrist, with every possession lost, every value destroyed, suffering from hunger, cold and brutality

hourly expecting extermination, found life not only worth preserving but realised that to live is to suffer, to survive is to find meaning in the suffering. This is a gem of dramatic narrative proving the truth of Nietzsche's dictum : "He who has a *why* to live can bear with almost any *how*."

**MEDICAL NEMESIS :** By Ivan Illich. Pub. : Rupa & Co. in association with Calder & Boyars, Delhi. Pp. 183. Price : Rs. 10.

That the medical establishment has become a major threat to health is the main theme of Dr. Illich's book *Medical Nemesis* with its sub-title "The Expropriation of Health". The supreme irony of the medical situation all over the world, including India, is that even as the authorities are mouthing proletarian platitudes about the need to carry modern techniques of medicine and scalpel to our rural brethren, one sees that outlays of crores of rupees are being made in founding streamlined modern hospitals in metropolitan areas when the primary needs of the vast countryside go abegging and other public amenities are starkly neglected. The author unerringly pinpoints on the modern paradox when underdevelopment deepens in the present artificial, affluent and elite quest for development, as he remarks : "Underdevelopment as a state of mind occurs when mass needs are converted to the demand for new brands of packaged solutions which are for ever beyond the reach of the majority." No more devastating comment on the hopeless drift of our so-called development, whether it is in production, health, education, transport services etc. can be found than in this able diagnosis of our present day ills, with special emphasis on the present day medical situation.

ARGUS

**PURANIC ENCYCLOPAEDIA (A Comprehensive Dictionary with special reference to Epic and Puranic Literature):** By Vettam Mani. Pub. : Motilal Banarsidass, Bungalow Road, Delhi-110007. Pp. 922. Price : Rs. 300.

Besides the eighteen Mahā-Purāṇas by Veda Vyāsa there are so many upa-purāṇas and numerous other works in Sanskrit and other languages one has to go through to get at the fund of information contained in this volume regarding religion, culture, scriptures, deities, avatars, sages, saints, persons, personalities, events, sacred places and so on. To fulfil the tremendous task of composing this *Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, the author Vettam Mani "plunged into the vast ocean of Sanskrit literature, and dived deep into it for thirteen years, studying not only original texts but also modern works in English,

Sanskrit, Malayalam and Hindi. Then it took him seven years to prepare the mss. in Malayalam for the Press. He has spent about Rs. 20,000 on books and travelling for this project. This work in Malayalam has seen four editions in about ten years from 1964 to 1974. Then the task of translating it into English was entrusted to and fulfilled by a very highly qualified committee of eminent scholars equally proficient in Malayalam and English. These are the outstanding facts behind the first edition of this work in English by the famous publishers in the field of Indology, M/s. Motilal Banarsidas of Delhi in 1975.

Sri P. R. Menon, Retd. Judge of Cochin Chief-Court and Ex-President of Kerala Sahitya Academy, in his foreword to this work in Malayalam, calls it "a really magnificent literary production, massive in size and rich and invaluable in contents"; and says: "Deep, extensive and exhaustive study, patient and untiring research and above all, absolute dedication to the cause are so very patent on every page of the book. The author deserves in ample measure the unstinted praise and appreciation of all lovers of learning and culture."

Even a cursory glance over the pages of this Encyclopaedia will convince any unbiased reader of the propriety of the observations of Justice P. R. Menon.

K. NATESAN

**PROBLEMS IN PHILOSOPHY: WEST AND EAST:** Ed. by R. T. Blackwood and A. L. Herman. Pub.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Pp. xvi+474. Price not quoted.

The subtitle of this beautifully printed and lavishly got up book is: 'A compelling exploration of philosophic and religious questions of as deep concern today as throughout history'. It marks a departure from the usual textbooks of philosophy which begin with the Greek thinkers and treat only of their successors in Western thought, mainly in regard to metaphysics.

The present volume gives equal importance to the four major departments of philosophy, viz., metaphysics, epistemology, theology and ethics. Under each, the major problems are posed in the very words of the leading thinkers not only of the West but also of the East. The standard translations and expositions of the thinkers have been carefully chosen and arranged with a very lucid and judicious introduction by the learned editors, which makes the volume very useful and interesting. Thus the first section opens with a general introduction and under ontology contains very good readings from Lucretious and Cārvāka epicureanism to represent

Materialism, Berkeley, and Vasubandhu who represent Idealism, and Plato and *Kaṭhopanishad* representing transcendentalism.

Similarly, we have equally representative and refreshing readings on Rational Psychology, problems of knowledge and logic like Truth, Sensation, Inference, Intuition, Revelation, Authority and Faith. We get readings not only from Plato and Nyāya, but also Descartes, Locke, Shankara, Vācaspati-mishra, Dharmakīrti and Kant, Aristotle and Stcherbatsky.

The problems of Theology are once again presented in all their fulness and variety providing equal scope for different theologians of the East and the West. The three *Āchāryas* of Vedānta come in for their rightful place here.

Under the problem of ethics are discussed some of the most puzzling questions: 'Human freedom and fatalism', 'What makes actions right?' 'Is the universe moral?' etc. The concluding topic is justice and society.

This is a good introduction to the basic problems of philosophy and can serve as a text for a first course in philosophy in our Universities. The editors deserve all praise for their highly useful, broad-based and illuminating selections as well as introductions to each field of study in philosophy.

**THE TRANSFORMATIVE VISION:** By Jos   Arg  elles. Pub.: Shambhala Publication, Inc., Berkeley. Pp. 364. Price: \$ 6.95.

The range and scope of this brilliantly written study is indicated in the sub-title — 'Reflections on the nature and history of human expression.' Its originality of approach, coverage of wide spheres of human behaviour and assessment of outstanding epochs in political, mystical and cultural history not only of the West, but also of the East, are marked throughout by profound insight and a genuine sympathy with modes of thought other than those which hold unrivalled sway over the minds of people at large today.

The author is a gifted creative artist and his basic problem is how to reconcile art and life. Art history is his *forte* and he finds in the work of creative painters the spontaneous expression of the psyche at work, harmonised perfectly with *techne* or technique part. These are the two key-terms in the whole of this study. Psyche represents the right cerebral hemisphere of the brain, the ability to intuit or perceive as a whole, and is the primary driving force of all creative and aesthetic activity. 'Techne' on the other hand is the artificial and



structural side of the human brain in its left hemisphere. It is at the root of all advancement in logic, analysis, language and mathematics. Psyche is unconscious while techne is mechanical.

In a closely reasoned discussion of the basic truths of old Indian, Mexican, Chinese and Japanese mythology and theology. The author takes his stand on the fact that science and technology with all its vaunted materialism is in fact the Iron age or *Kaliyuga* which has starved and stifled the Psyche from its activity. It is what he calls 'split-brain' culture. 'Art for art's sake' is also an off-shoot of this culture only, killing spontaneous expression.

There are twentyfour chapters which take us through the gamut of history, philosophy, the Artistic quest and the romantic quest, the world of dreams, photography and madness and so on, culminating in the final transformative vision itself. The bibliography is extensive running to thirteen pages. The author deserves our congratulations for indicating the visions of our seers and holy men in convincing language.

(Dr.) K. KRISHNAMOORTHY.

**THE WAY OF THE MYSTICS:** The Early Christian Mystics and the Rise of the Sufis: By Margaret Smith. Pub.: Sheldon Press, Marylebone Road, London, NW-1 4-DU. Pp. 276. Price: £ 2.95.

This is a welcome new edition of the book, dealing with the relationship of the Sufis and their teaching with the mystical teaching found in the early Christian Church of the near and middle East on the basis of the writings of the early mystics of both Christianity and Islam. The author finds a close resemblance of the mystical doctrines of both by the early Sufi mystics to the teachings of the early Christian mystics. The conception of God as

the One Reality and the only Existence is common to both.

Margaret Smith's book clears the misrepresentations and misunderstandings in their doctrines and emphasises their points of contact which were closest at the beginning of the Islamic era. The author lets the mystics speak for themselves. The book is enlivened by the description of the lives of many early saints and mystics to whom truth has been revealed. In the Foreword it is aptly said that this book is scholarly, written and inspired by a devotional spirit.

**I CHING:** The Chinese Book of Change: Translated by John Blofeld, A Mandala book published by Unwin Paperbacks. (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., Ruskin House, Museum Street, London, WC-1A 1-LU). Pp. 227. Price: £ 1.95.

The aim of John Blofeld in making this new translation of the book is to give in the simplest language instructions for its use in divination. It is one of the oldest books of profound insight being already ancient in the times of Confucius. It makes the flux of change and its rhythm the centre of observation. It consists of hexagrams arranged in their 64 combinations. Confucius added a commentary to the texts and so have others. Richard Wilhelm's earlier and more extensive translation is well-known to the Western readers. The text has a living meaning and a depth of perspective if approached in the right spirit of reverence and integrity. The translator also stresses the religious approach to it, though the emphasis is on divination in which people take so much interest. The hexagrams with their commentaries have profound metaphysical and cosmological implications and in the opinion of this reviewer should neither be abridged nor given new individualised meanings.

LUCIA OSBORNE.

### RAMANA MAHARSHI CONTACT LETTER

Seekers interested to contact other seekers on the path and receive books about Sri Ramana Maharshi may write to the address given below for more information:

RAMANA MAHARSHI CONTACT LETTER,  
49, Osborne Road,  
REDHILL, Surrey, England.  
(Telephone: Redhill: 65674)

# ASHRAM BULLETIN



*Beautifully decorated Mother Yogambika*

## NAVARATRI CELEBRATIONS AT THE ASHRAM

One of the colourful functions at the Ashram in which devotees participate with devotional fervour is the *Navaratri* celebration when the deity, Mother Yogambika, appears decorated in one of her various aspects on each of the nine evenings.

This year too these celebrations were conducted between September 24 and October 2.

Navaratri is the period of nine days after the new-moon day of the month of *Purattasi*, particularly prescribed for the worship of the Mother of the Universe in Her three important aspects : Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. Each of these three aspects is specially adored on the three successive periods of three days.

*Devi Mahatmyam*, *Durga-Saptasati* (700) and *Chandi* are the names of the sacred Work in which are found the exploits and praise of these three Maha Saktis operating in the universe.

At the Ashram, apart from the daily *pārāyanam* (chanting) of *Durga-Saptasati*, a *Laksharchana* of Lalita (a hundred archanas with the 1000 Names of Lalita) takes place at the inner *sanctum* of Sri Chakra in the shrine during this period. Every evening one of the various aspects of Mahasakti is put on view with enchanting decorations. Altogether it is a period of universal worship throughout *Bharat* (India) and wherever the devotees of the Mother dwell in the world.

The day after these nine days is known as *Vijayadasami* — the Tenth Day of Victory. All of us are after success in our respective efforts and let us all join in the universal Worship of the Mother during this period in particular.





Sri T. N. Venkataraman, Smt. Soundaram Kailasam and the Chief Justice Sri P. S. Kailasam

### CHIEF JUSTICE SRI P. S. KAILASAM VISITS THE ASHRAM

The Chief Justice of Madras High Court, *Sri P. S. Kailasam*, visited the Ashram on September 5. He was accompanied by his wife, *Smt. Soundaram Kailasam*, a reputed Tamil scholar.

Sri T. N. Venkataraman, President of the Ashram, took them round the Ashram. The distinguished guests showed keen interest in seeing all the places within the Ashram hallowed by the presence of Sri Maharshi, though this is not their first visit. They were shown the writings of Maharshi in his own hand in several languages.

The Chief Justice expressed happiness that the Ashram is maintained very well.

After paying homage at the Samadhi shrine of Sri Bhagavan, the Chief Justice received the various publications of the Ashram, presented by Ashram President, Sri Venkataraman. The residing old devotees were introduced to the guests.

\* \* \* \* \*

### RAMANA KENDRA, NEW DELHI

*Aruna Vijaya Day* — September 1 — was celebrated as the second anniversary of the Kendra's foundation. H. H. Shri Jagadguru Shankaracharya of Jyotir Math, who presided, gave a long discourse on *guru tattva* and Sri Bhagavan's method of *Vichara* (Self-enquiry).

*Muruganar Day* was observed on August 29, when groups of ladies sang the poet's songs. On Monday August 30, Sri Dandapani Oduwar gave a special recital of songs on and by Muruganar.

\* \* \*

### PILGRIMS

*Sri R. Venkataraman*, once a Minister of Tamil Nadu Government and a staunch devotee of Sri Bhagavan,

visited the Ashram on August 25. He was pleased to be at the Ashram after a few years<sup>1</sup> and he was welcomed by the resident old devotees with warmth.

After paying homage at the *Samadhi* of Sri Bhagavan, he spent half an hour in the Old Hall meditating. Coming out of it he expressed of his own accord :

"This is the most peaceful place in the whole world. Sitting for meditation at the Old Hall is a rare spiritual privilege."



*Sri R. Venkataraman*

<sup>1</sup> for an account of his earlier visit please see p. 112 of April, 1973 issue.

It is a welcome feature that members of *Ramana Kendra*, New Delhi, are making a pilgrimage to Arunachala with their families whenever they get an opportunity.

We are happy to report that the Treasurer of the Kendra, *Sri C. G. Balasubramanian*, a very active and tireless worker, with his wife and son, visited the Ashram and spent a week in June at the peaceful Ashram precincts. *Sri L. T. Govindarajan*, of the Delhi Kendra, was another visitor.

*Smt. Visalakshi Swaminathan* (wife of Prof. K. Swaminathan), accompanied by her daughter, *Smt. Mahalakshmi* and son-in-law, *Sri P. R. Suryanandan*, spent a few days at the Ashram from September 5.

The Secretary of the Kendra, *Sri A. R. Natarajan*, who is by now well-known to our readers, with his family spent almost all his holidays at the Ashram (also in June), though his nearest kith and kin are all in Madras. *Smt. Sulochana Natarajan*, with her daughters *Sarada*<sup>1</sup> and *Ambika*, spent her time either meditating or singing hymns and songs on and by Bhagavan at His Samadhi shrine. *Smt. Sulochana* brought her mother, *Smt. Dharma Venkataraman* (wife of Ex-High Court Judge, *Sri K. S. Venkataraman*), who for the first time had a taste of the peaceful Ashram life.

*Mr. Jean-Michel Laborde* of France, who spent a few months at the Ashram solely engaged in *sadhana*,

was directed to Bhagavan's Teaching by *Sri H. W. L. Poonja*<sup>2</sup>, though he had heard of Him earlier. He is happy to communicate the following to brother-devotees:

"The story of 'my' coming to Bhagavan is the sole theme of 'my life'.

"The beginning is unknown. Or, did it start when the 19-year-old boy in Paris read with interest some

pages on 'immortal yogis in Tibet helping the world in silence'? May be, because he went to look for them immediately; but he failed to reach even the first snows in the Himalayas, got ill and went to Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry. Though he was about to die he slowly recovered there. Before returning to France, a casual hearing of the name of *Ramana Maharshi* of Arunachala



*Jean Michel Laborde*

<sup>1</sup> An article by *Sarada*, about her visit to the Ashram is published in this issue, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> An account of him may be found on p. 155 of the July, 1965 issue under the heading: 'How I Came to the Maharshi'.

*Sri A. R. Natarajan*, *Mrs. Sulochana Natarajan*, *Kumari Sarada*, *Smt. Dharma Venkataraman* and *Ambika*





flooded his heart with some indescribable illumination.

"About four years ago, he had by His Grace his first direct glimpse of the Self, the effect of which lasted for a week. Then things began to move on smoothly as if they had been prearranged. As soon as he wanted a book on Maharshi somebody gave him His biography by B. V. Narasimha Swami, entitled *Self Realisation*. Within a few hours everything became clear and Bhagavan has been sustaining him ever since.

"The next miracle in his life happened two years ago in Switzerland. It was his meeting and contact with Sri H. W. L. Poonja, one of Sri Maharshi's disciples. To him, he opened his heart and had the benefit of his elevating company for about a year. The effect of such a contact is everlasting. After a year he is here at the Feet of Bhagavan. He knows now that he never was nor could be anywhere else!

"The beginning is Prayer at Bhagavan's Feet and the end is ecstasy beyond words. There is none else and nothing else but Bhagavan."

— JEAN-MICHEL LABORDE, PARIS.

\* \* \*

In our January, 1972 issue (p. 62) we were happy to publish an account of a Hill owned by Mr. Gerd Ledermann in Obi Obi in Australia being named 'Arunachala'. This sincere devotee was at the Ashram in July-August. He writes:

"Twelve years ago, my wife, small son and I were travelling in India and we came to Sri Ramanasramam. Four weeks later we returned, stayed a week or two and received the first issue of *The Mountain Path* from Arthur Osborne. I knew then that Sri Bhagavan's Grace would be of much help to me.

"On our farm in Australia we dedicated a little temple to Ramana Maharshi and behind our house we built a small shrine to Him on a hill we named 'Arunachala'.

"All through this time Sri Bhagavan has been my guide — and now I have come back to Sri Ramanasramam — it has been like coming HOME. The rest is Silence....."

—GERD LEDERMANN, Australia.

\* \* \*

Sri Shyamal Thattu is an earnest devotee, who came here from Simla on his first visit to the Ashram, though he has been in touch with us and has been a subscriber to *The Mountain Path*. He moved closely with old devotees and went with them round the Hill Arunachala and visited Skandashram, Virupakshi Cave and other places on the Hill, sanctified by Sri Bhagavan's stay.

He went to Madurai to have darshan at the famous temple of Meenakshi Sundareshwara often visited by Bhagavan and also of 'Ramana Mandiram', where Bhagavan as a boy of sixteen attained Illumination. Sri Thattu was profoundly moved by all this.

He is deeply interested in the afforestation of Arunachala and wishes the Ashram and the Forest Depart-

ment to take up the matter in right earnest. May our united efforts hasten this scheme of vital importance to all.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Nergish Parekh from Bombay, a devout Parsee is a serious seeker and as such a welcome visitor at our Ashram. Here is her own account of the operation of the Grace and Power of Sri Bhagavan:

"It was middle of June 1961. I was extremely unhappy, worried and depressed. My husband had just got over a severe coronary attack and my infant son's life was still in balance because of some congenital obstructions in the urethra. I kept myself going through sheer will-power and unshakable faith in and utter devotion to That Supreme Reality I believed in, but could not comprehend.



Mrs. Nergish Parekh

"One evening I was passing by a book-stall when my eyes suddenly fell on the book: *Self Realisation*, with Bhagavan's picture on the cover. I stopped, fascinated, the face seemed familiar as if I had known Him all my life — though in reality I had not heard or read about Bhagavan till then — it seemed to beckon to me to give me some inner message. I bought that book and no sooner did I reach home, started reading it with mixed feelings. I had hardly gone through a few chapters when suddenly some inner voice clearly told me that at last I had found my Father — my Gurr — whom I was seeking and praying to for help and solace unknowingly. I held on to the book tightly, crying like a child, pouring out my heart to Him and imploring Him in all humility for His Grace and Protection which He, the All-Pervading One full of Love and Compassion and Understanding, has bestowed on me ever since.

"Due to family responsibilities my much-longed for visit to Arunachala remained a dream till January 1971. Just by chance I happened to hear that a certain family was proceeding to Sri Ramanasramam. I took it as a God-sent opportunity, joined that party and came to Tiruvannamalai with my son, who was completely cured of his ailment without surgery through Bhagavan's Grace. As soon as I entered the Ashram compound I felt overwhelmed by Bhagavan's Grace and I prostrated to Him then and there on the sacred ground of Arunachala with uncontrollable tears streaming down my cheeks. I felt that at last I had come HOME —

to my Father's Home! This short stay gave me the inspiration and strength to go on with my *sadhana* more intensely and to be aware of my Self which is the Self in all.

"Since then I have visited the Ashram twice and every visit has brought me nearer and nearer to my Guru — that Supreme Awareness. There are moments when I feel absolutely one with Him.

"May my Guru's Grace and Guidance be on one and all for ever."

— NERGISH PAREKH, BOMBAY.

We have had the pleasure recently in having amidst us in August, *Sri Chandrarao Mudaliar* of Kancheepuram, Retired Tahsildar and President of Kancheepuram Silk Weavers Co-operative Society. He came with his wife, *Smt. Punithammal* (daughter of the late *Sri A. Devaraja Mudaliar*, compiler of *Day by Day with Bhagavan*), son, *Sri C. Venkata Ramanan*, and daughter-in-law, *Smt. Shanti*. *Smt. Vijaya Jagadeesan*, mother of *Smt. Shanti*, also accompanied them.



(l to r) *Sri C. Venkataraman*, *Master Arun*, *Smt. Shanti*, *Smt. Vijaya Jagadeesan*, *Smt. Punithammal*, and *Sri Chandrarao Mudaliar*

A very sincere old devotee of *Sri Bhagavan* ever since 1926, *Sri Chandrarao Mudaliar* attributes the birth of his son under difficult circumstances entirely to the Grace of *Sri Bhagavan* and hence he was named after *Sri Bhagavan* (*Venkata Ramanan*). It was a happy sight to see *Sri Venkata Ramanan's* son, *Master Arun*.

roaming about the Ashram, full of enthusiasm and devotion.

The entire family follows the healthy tradition set by *Sri Chandrarao Mudaliar* to spend some days of devotion and dedication at the Ashram whenever they have any holidays. Hence, all of them are welcome at the Ashram whenever they go over here.

\* \* \*

We were very happy to have had amidst us *Sri Selvarajan Yesudian* with his family. He is well-known in Europe as the life and soul of *Yogaschule Yesudian-Haich, Restelbergstr. 89, 8044-Zurich, Switzerland*. Though his stay was short he felt deeply happy and at home in the proximity of Holy Arunachala and the Shrine of Grace of *Sri Bhagavan*. He received his training in Hatha and Raja Yoga in early childhood. Afflicted by a series of severe illnesses, the last being paralysis with muscular atrophy, he made a complete recovery through the practice of Yoga. He has established Hatha and Raja Yoga schools in several places in Europe and has also written authentic books on Yoga.



*Sri Selvarajan Yesudian*

He is a sincere devotee of *Sri Bhagavan* and guides his students to Him whenever appropriate. He also quotes the Maharshi in his books profusely. The following account<sup>1</sup> will be read with interest :

"*Sri Ramana Maharshi*, the wise man of Arunachala in Southern India, was visited by people of all classes. Often some of India's greatest scholars would forgather to pay homage to this holy man. Maharshi rarely spoke. He transmitted his wisdom by silence, radiating a peace which flowed tangibly from the immeasurable heights of his being.... Among the crowds of visitors was a boy of eight and a half years. For a long time this boy sat without speaking in front of the saint. Towards evening Maharshi set off on his daily walk up the hill. The boy then turned to the meeting and spoke in very simple and easily understandable words about the principles of the Yoga and Vedanta philosophy, quoting the teachings of the great Indian sages of the

<sup>1</sup> culled from his book, *Self Reliance Through Yoga*, (p. 144) published by *M/s. George Allen & Unwin Ltd.*, London.



past. The listeners were absorbed and moved by the great knowledge the boy showed. When Maharshi returned, all conversation died down. But the boy did not take his eyes off his master for minutes, and tears of ecstasy flowed down his small, innocent face. Soon afterwards the boy rose and went away. One or two of the learned listeners then approached the wise man and asked him to explain the strange happening to them. And he answered them : "The experiences of his last life are powerful in him".

\* \* \*

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan after retiring from his service in the University of Madras as Director for Advanced Study in Philosophy, paid a visit to the Ashram on August 31, to pay homage to Sri Bhagavan. He was accompanied by *Princess Irene* of Greece, her sister and other members of the Royal family.



Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan

Dr. Mahadevan was keen to be at the Ashram on September 1, the holy day, 80 years ago. Sri Bhagavan had stepped into Arunachala (Sept. 1, 1896). The entire Royal family were very happy to spend a few days at the Ashram in the company of Dr. Mahadevan whom they all revere.

*Sri D. S. Sastri*<sup>1</sup> spent ten days at the Ashram in August. Such earnest devotees are always welcome at the Ashram ; especially the old resident-devotees rejoice in their company reminiscing on the Master. We wish such elder devotees visit the Ashram oftener.

\* \* \*

### ASHRAM FREE DISPENSARY

Dr. P. Durairaj, M.B.B.S., young and energetic, has now taken over our Ashram Free Dispensary from August 2, 1976. We are happy that patients, almost entirely from the poor section, are flocking in increasing numbers.

We appeal to Pharmaceutical Firms to donate gifts of whatever drugs they can spare to our Free Dispensary.

Dr. Ananda, M.B.B.S., after having rendered honorary service at our Dispensary for over three years has discontinued owing to his heavy private practice.

Sri Ramanasramam thankshim for services rendered.

<sup>1</sup> Introduced to our readers on p. 135 of April, 1971 issue.



Dr. Durairaj

## THE GLORY OF ARUNACHALA

"After an all-night train journey, I arrived at Tiruvannamalai and saw the Hill Arunachala rising up three thousand feet out of flat terrain ; and being so close it completely dominated the scene....I have seen the Taj Mahal by moon-light and the vast expanse of the snow-clad Himalayas stretching for a hundred miles, but in all India I never saw anything to equal the first glimpse of the holy hill, rose-crowned by the glory of the morning light. It so dominated my mental horizon that I feel unequal to the task of impartial judgment."

— ANNE MARSHAL in *Hunting the Guru in India*

## OBITUARY

## SRI T. P. RAMACHANDRA IYER

*Sri T. P. Ramachandra Iyer*, generally known as T. P. R., one of the intimate devotees, passed away into the Peace of Bhagavan on the evening of August 26; he was bed-ridden for two years after a sudden paralytic stroke. He was in the JIPMAR Hospital, Pondicherry, for a year and was then taken to Bangalore by close relatives and taken good care of to the end. Throughout this period T. P. R. used to get hilarious and express his joy whenever any devotee of Bhagavan paid him a visit.



*Bhagavan and T. P. Ramachandra Iyer*

T. P. R. had the good fortune of being one of the attendants of Bhagavan during the last years. Before that he had served as a lawyer defending the interest of the Ashram in some litigation brought about by some disgruntled persons. He had casually seen Bhagavan now and then even when He was living on the Hill. There are some more details about his devotion and intimate contact with Bhagavan in our July 1966 issue, p. 299. Though he got married early, he lost his wife soon after and that enabled him to devote his heart solely to Bhagavan. Probably Bhagavan helped him to exhaust his store of *karma* by his last suffering so that he might get dissolved in Him completely.

## SRI P. S. M. THEERTHAGIRI CHETTIAR

We deplore the passing away of our old friend, *Sri P. S. M. Theerthagiri Chettiar*, on August 5, at

Tiruvannamalai. A leading businessman, he along with every member of his family was ardently devoted to Sri Bhagavan for several decades.

He was nominated on the Board of Trustees of Sri Ramanasramam from December, 1970. As a Trustee, which position he occupied till his demise, he has done yeoman service to the Ashram administration. The Ashram has thus lost in him a stalwart supporter.

We convey our condolences to the members of his family.

## DR. N. KUPPUSWAMY SARMA

In the passing of *Dr. N. Kuppuswamy Sarma* (Retired Veterinary Officer, Madurai) in Bombay, we have lost a friend and a very sincere devotee of Sri Bhagavan.

Drawn to the mysticism of Hindu philosophy from early youth he was a devotee of Sri Sankaracharya of Kanyakotipeetham and later in life was powerfully drawn towards Bhagavan Sri Ramana. This was intensified further when he was posted at Tirupattur, 50 miles from Tiruvannamalai. He was never tired of discoursing on the philosophy and teaching of Bhagavan Ramana and Sri Adi Sankara. He was wellversed in Sanskrit and Tamil philosophical works.



*Dr. N. Kuppuswamy Sarma*

In the last years of his life, he was of immense help to *Sri Ramana Mandiram*, Madurai, after retirement, taking a keen interest in its activities.

May he rest in the eternal peace of the Lord !

## SRI V. KRISHNA IYER

We deeply regret to report the demise of *Sri V. Krishna Iyer* at Bombay on June 20, after a brief illness. For many years he served the Ashram diligently, despite his age. He now rests at the Feet of the Lord !

## JANAKI AMMAL

*Janaki Ammal*, mother of Sri P. R. Suryanandan, was a long-standing devotee. She passed away in C. M. C. Hospital, Vellore, on August 24. She was Sri K. Natesan's mother-in-law.



# INTRODUCING....

Sri & Smt. J. V. Somayajulu

*Sri J. V. Somayajulu* is a prominent businessman of Madras and a member of the governing body of Tirupathi Tirumalai Devasthanam. A pious and practising Hindu, he first came to Tiruvannamalai all by himself and had *darsan* of Bhagavan in 1946. Since then he has visited the Ashram many, many times during the life-time of Bhagavan, and invariably with his family or else in the company of friends like Sri D. S. Sastri<sup>1</sup> and the late Sri A. R. Narayana Rao.<sup>2</sup> On all these occasions he used to sit in silence in Bhagavan's presence, never discussing any subject or making any request. He was quite content to receive from Bhagavan a welcome nod at the beginning and a farewell smile at the end of each visit.

Concerning these early visits he remembers some incidents which are worth relating in his own words :

"One week-end as we were returning to Madras in our car, the luggage was piled up in the dicky. Somewhere on the way, a few miles before Acharapakkam, a box containing valuables fell down from the dicky without being noticed by any of us. The driver of a truck coming

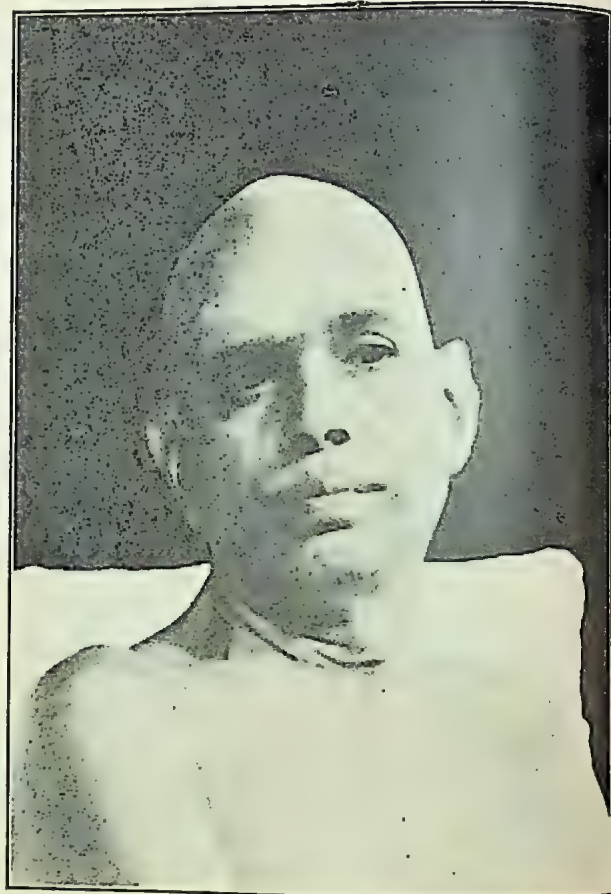


*Sri J. V. Somayajulu*



*Smt. Somayajulu*

behind us saw the box falling, stopped his truck and was trying to overtake our car in order to restore the box to us. But we were speeding fast and left the truck far behind. However, as we approached Acharapakkam we found the railway gates closed and had to stop and wait for them to open again. Meantime the lorry driver also reached the level-crossing, and got down and gave us the



box, of whose loss we had till then been blissfully ignorant. What is more, the good man declined to accept the tip we offered him."

"On another occasion — on the eve of the Kumbhabhishekam of Mother's Shrine — Chinnaswami wanted me to take a big granite stone from Tiruvannamalai to Madras for getting carved. After we had travelled a few miles the driver of the car reported ruefully that

<sup>1</sup> Introduced to our readers in our April, 1971 issue, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Introduced to our readers in our January, 1971 issue, p. 70.

the brake refused to work and it was in fear and trembling that we performed the rest of the journey. When the car with the passengers and the heavy stone reached home safe at last, we were full of gratitude for we felt that we had been the recipients of Bhagavan's special grace and that some miracle had averted a major accident."

When Sri D. S. Sastri arranged discourses in his house for 20 months on *Bhagavad Gita*, with the kind approval of Sri Bhagavan, Sri Somayajulu attentively participated and thus gained ground in scriptural lore, which helped him very much to understand the depth of Sri Bhagavan's teaching of *Vichara*.

He has been very helpful to *The Mountain Path* from its inception by giving valuable guidance and assistance to the *Managing Editor*.

Even after the *Brahma Nirvana* of Bhagavan, Sri Somayajulu and his wife have been visiting the Ashram on most of all important occasions. For them, Bhagavan is "God, Guru and Self". They thus worship Sri Bhagavan every day and firmly believe that what they are today is entirely due to the Grace of Sri Bhagavan.

We wish this devout couple a long life of devotion and dedication.

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# Letters to the Editor

Replies by Lucia Osborne

## GLIMPSE OF ETERNITY

After many ups and downs when I was on the point of giving up the *Vichara*, in desperation I was vouchsafed a glimpse of Reality in an indescribable moment of Eternity which leaves no doubt. Oneness of Being or pure I AM-ness engulfing all is a dead certainty if words could be adequate to give it expression. But it did not last. Now how am I to continue with the *Vichara*. *Who Am I?* But I know who I am even if it is only a memory of an indescribable experience of a veil being removed for that moment. How to steady the mind and make it still so that this experience may be vouchsafed again and stay? Please advise. To regain this state will be the only aim of my life. The world has nothing to offer any more.

ANONYMOUS

*After such an experience a seeker should always engage in meditation on the Self and remembrance. The mind should be withdrawn from going outwards. When thoughts arise one tries to find out their source as also the source of the I-notion. One keeps up a current of watchfulness like a cat over a mousehole or even better if possible a current of awareness in stillness without even watching. Whatever is helpful to still the mind is good. Some find also invocation helpful. The Self calling to the Self till the heart melts with love. Then it turns into meditation.*

Arunachala ! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh, Arunachala !

\* \* \* \*

## PROBLEMS ON THE PATH

Although a student of Bhagavan's teaching for several years I have only recently subscribed to *The Mountain Path*. The late Arthur Osborne believed it desirable to understand the basic theory before proceeding to practise and I should be exceedingly grateful if you would try to resolve two particular difficulties that I have (so far away one feels lonely, remote and cut off). Their existence seems to make it much harder to practise the quiet mind necessary for effective Self-enquiry.

I am much weighed down by the many mistakes I have made in my life and (although I have had advantages and opportunities above average) by my failure to accomplish more than a very little useful work and to provide the standard of living free from anxieties

for the future that my family were entitled to. The second problem is the difficulty and worry of making necessary decisions for the future in these two respects, namely my work and my family's well being....

I feel that it may not be so hard to renounce desires for possessions and for pleasures of the senses, as it is to ignore the awareness of having failed badly in the main obligations of life in the world.

What attitude of mind should one adopt? Does Bhagavan's teaching on detachment that one is to give up the feeling that 'I' am working.. and simply to observe entirely dispassionately the body carrying out the preordained activities and so forth mean that one need not feel the responsibility for (by ordinary standards) serious failures of one's life, to feel no sadness or regrets....? and that there is no need of taking necessary decisions for the future....but simply to observe the body acting of itself? Is this what is meant by Bhagavan's advice 'You can hand over all your burdens to Him'?

We are exhorted to make constant effort spiritually, but to make no effort in our work?

Of course it would be a wonderful relief and simplification if one really could ignore worldly failures and to allow decisions to make themselves — yet it seems too much like shirking one's ordinary duties! Or is this doubt simply the ego rearing its ugly head?.....

M. K., ENGLAND

*It serves no useful purpose to be weighed down by a feeling of guilt for mistakes, missed opportunities and failure. A householder takes necessary decisions for the future and well-being of his family in a spirit of detachment as far as possible. The body is insentient and does not act of itself. It is only an instrument. Surrendering one's burdens to Bhagavan does not mean shirking one's duties in life. Whatever duties fall to our lot should be performed to the best of our ability and judgement, as selflessly as possible, leaving the results to Bhagavan. You do what seems necessary and do not worry about the outcome which will be according to your prarabdha. So results good or bad from a worldly point of view, should be accepted with equanimity. The performance of plain duty in such a spirit is also sadhana. Everyone gets what he needs for his spiritual unfoldment. Self-enquiry is a shortcut to realisation. When assailed by worries and doubts the question to whom are these worries etc., may clear the field. We have the choice and freewill which is the only freedom we have to make effort not to*

identify ourselves with the body and its troubles and simply watch its shadow play or in other words be a mere witness of its activities when the source of both freewill and fate is found by enquiry.

\* \* \* \*

## IS SERVICE A 'MUST'

I was surprised to read in a Souvenir, *Chaitanya*, the view expressed by one of the contributors, Hugo Maier : Till you reach the state of *Jnana* and thus wake up from this *Maya* you must do social service by relieving suffering whenever you see it'. Is that according to Bhagavan's teaching? There was no 'must' or emphasis on service in His teaching so far as I know and I have read most of the relevant books. His teaching centres on the *Vichara*, the path of *Jnana*, which is a shortcut. By temperament I am inclined to follow the path of *bhakti*, combined with Self-enquiry ending in pure contemplation. When the heart melts with love it naturally embraces all humanity and those who need help will be helped spontaneously without making an issue of it or a path. Then why this emphasis on service *per se* till liberation is gained? Will service be more efficacious and shorten the pilgrimage? Have I overlooked something? I shall be glad to have this matter clarified.

A SEEKER & PILGRIM TO ARUNACHALA

Although Bhagavan's teaching centres on the *Vichara*, the path of *Jnana*, there was no 'must' about it and He advised seekers to follow whatever path was best adapted to them. He taught and guided all on paths according to the aptitude of the seeker maintaining as stated in My Recollections of Bhagavan Sri Ramana by Devaraja Mudaliar that 'whatever paths men may begin with, they must eventually end in *Jnana* which alone liberates one from birth and death'. He maintained that a true *Jnani* contains all paths including Karma yoga, i.e., the path of service. In the twelfth discourse of the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna enumerates the four paths leading to liberation, starting with *Jnana* and ending with the path of service according to the *pakwa* or aptitude of the devotee. 'If you cannot do even this then....' Huang Po also says that the path of service does not lead to liberation though it purifies the mind upto a point. Ananda though he served his Master for twenty years was unable to perceive more than his outward appearance and form and was therefore admonished by the Buddha in these words : "Those who concentrate entirely upon helping the world cannot escape from among the horned ones", meaning that if deliverance could be attained merely as a result of good works Ananda would have earned it many times over. In some Buddhist sub-sects the chief emphasis is placed on works of piety and charity; in Zen, nobility of heart and deed are prerequisites for followers of the Path, but they do not

form part of the Path to Liberation itself (The Zen Teaching of Huang Po, *The Wan Ling Record*, p. 114).

If there is no inclination or aptitude for other paths then it is better to do service than be self-centered with regard to physical well-being.

Bhagavan said that the more one develops the giving nature the nearer we are to God.

\* \* \* \*

## ON SOCIAL SERVICE—I

I am a devotee of Sri Ramana on a visit to Sri Ramana-sramam. The Souvenir : *Chaitanya*, published in aid of *Guru Paduka* came into my hands and I was surprised to read first of all the title, 'Gurupaduka', since, as I ascertained, Bhagavan never wore any *padukas* (sandals or any other footwear after coming to Arunachala) and next the view expressed by Hugo Maier in his contribution that everyone 'must' do social service till he reaches the state of 'Jnana'. The second sloka of *Upadesa Saram* says that action bears fruit in action, their results pass away and yet leave seeds that cast the agent into an ocean of action. Action, therefore, does not bring Liberation. It only points the way to it, if performed in a spirit of detachment as service to God. I am writing this as I feel that such things should be put straight so as not to mislead newcomers.

A DEVOTEE FROM U. S. A.

## II

While looking through magazines at the Ashram I was surprised by the article of Hugo Maier in the *Chaitanya Souvenir*. I have already read and studied quite a few books about Sri Ramana Maharshi and His teaching and I began to wonder whether Bhagavan really taught that social service is a 'must'. We know that *karma marga* can purify the mind but does not lead to Liberation. Then why this 'must' when there are other paths which do lead to Liberation and are shortcuts?

But this is not all, because straight in the next sentence the author says that such service must be performed without *ahamkara* that is without the ego! How can that be so long as one has not reached the state of *Jnana*? Only a *Jnani* can act without the ego. As for myself I find Self-enquiry all-sufficient and most helpful. Must I combine it with service?

KRZYSZTOF STEC FROM KATOWICE

It is a sign of Grace to be able to practice *Vichara* straightaway and find it so helpful. Even in *sadhana* the mind sometimes needs some variety. One can combine Self-enquiry with whatever other practice is helpful but there is no 'must' about it. Self-enquiry is so



logical, easy and simple that its very simplicity may seem difficult for complicated minds. Bhagavan once said that people do not like simplicity; they want mystery and of course a lot of talk. If one says 'my' mind, 'my' body, 'my' feelings, etc., the question arises who says it, whose? Who am I really? On the advaitic path which teaches Oneness of Being again the question arises, Who Am I? All is One and nothing beside it but nobody doubts his own existence; then Who am I? As pointed out by Bhagavan a true Jnani contains all paths, including the path of service.

\* \* \* \*

### IMPROVE YOURSELF

People often raise the question of social service, particularly in the light of *sadhana*. I would quote an old Dutch saying: "To improve the world, start with yourself"! The best social service one can do is to strive for realisation, as by realising one's true state

the whole world is uplifted. This does not mean that one should turn away a hungry man but that one should not go out of one's way to look for one. If it is one's destiny to do social service it will come about of its own accord as one's duty in life. Visitors to Sri Ramanasramam used to raise the question of social service before Bhagavan, who replied: "He who created the world will certainly be able to look after it." One Swami compared the world humorously to a dog's tail. Put it in a straight tube and it will be straight. The moment you take it out of the tube it curls up again. Then he asked his disciple who was plying him with such questions: 'Do you think God cannot manage without your help? Far more important people have tried to help the world. Is it any better for it? The world is helped when one gets rid of one's ego.'

MARLEEN BOERS, BOMBAY

*Everything takes its course. This applies also to the decline of the cycle of civilization, i.e., the Kali Yuga.*

## A Hymn of Hui Neng

Deluded men practise blessed virtues, not the truth  
Which they say these virtues are. To give alms  
And offerings result in boundless blessings, but  
Already in the mind have the three poisons been distilled.  
If they hope for expiation by practising these blessed  
virtues  
They will gain in their next lives much blessings, but  
their former sins remain.  
They should in their own minds destroy the cause of sin

.....  
Students of truth who ever contemplate  
Their own nature will be what Buddhas are.  
My ancestors transmitted nothing but this instantaneous  
Dharma. May all see the oneness of their nature<sup>1</sup>!  
If we seek the future Dharmakaya we must wash  
From out of our minds and throw away all dharma forms.  
Exert yourselves to see your nature, take not things easy.

By Hui Neng, the Sixth Patriarch,  
— from *Ch'an and Zen Teaching*  
(third series)

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the true Self.



# THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(QUARTERLY)

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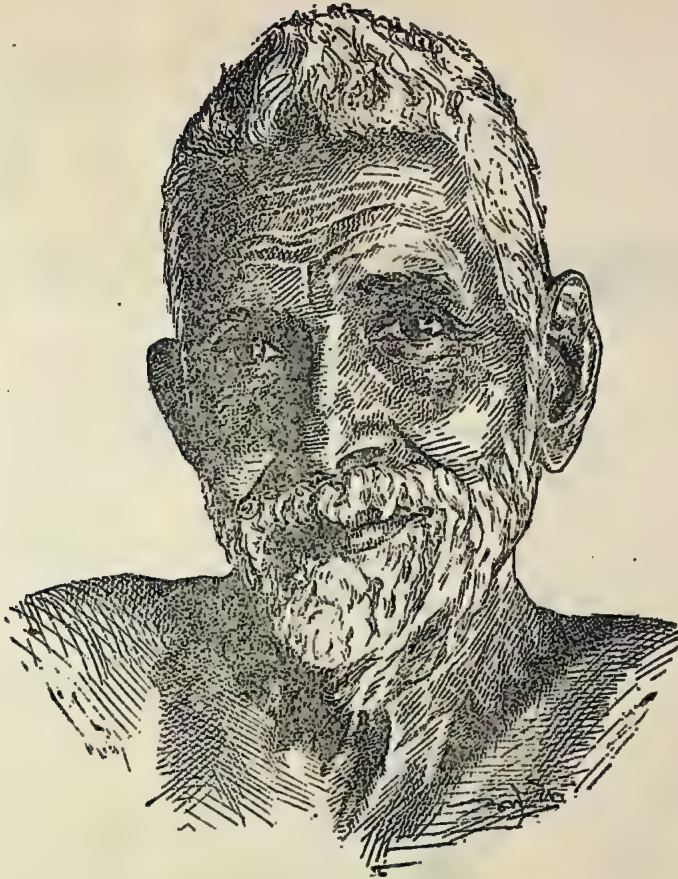
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In body, mind and spirit  
we bow to thee O Lord ;  
accept us at thy Lotus Feet.

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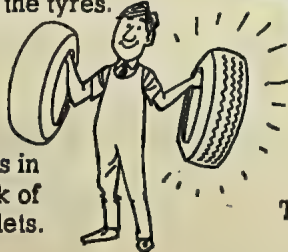
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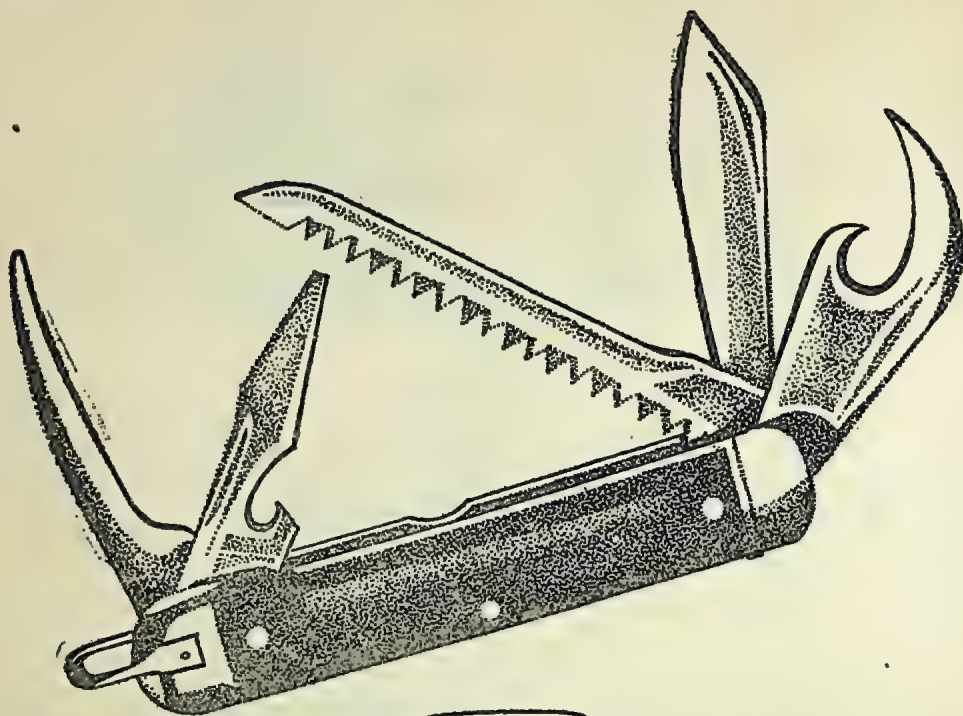
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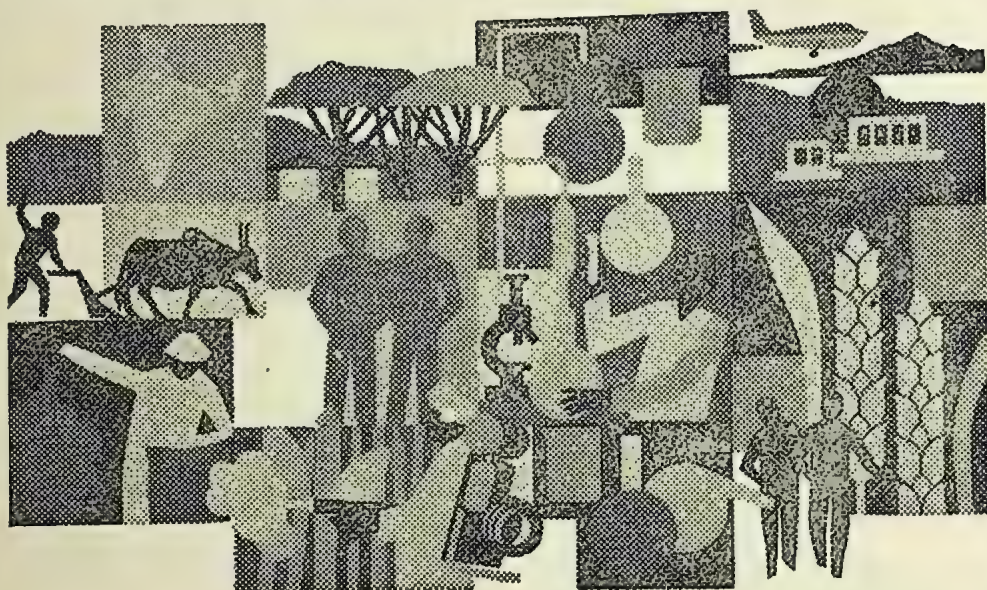
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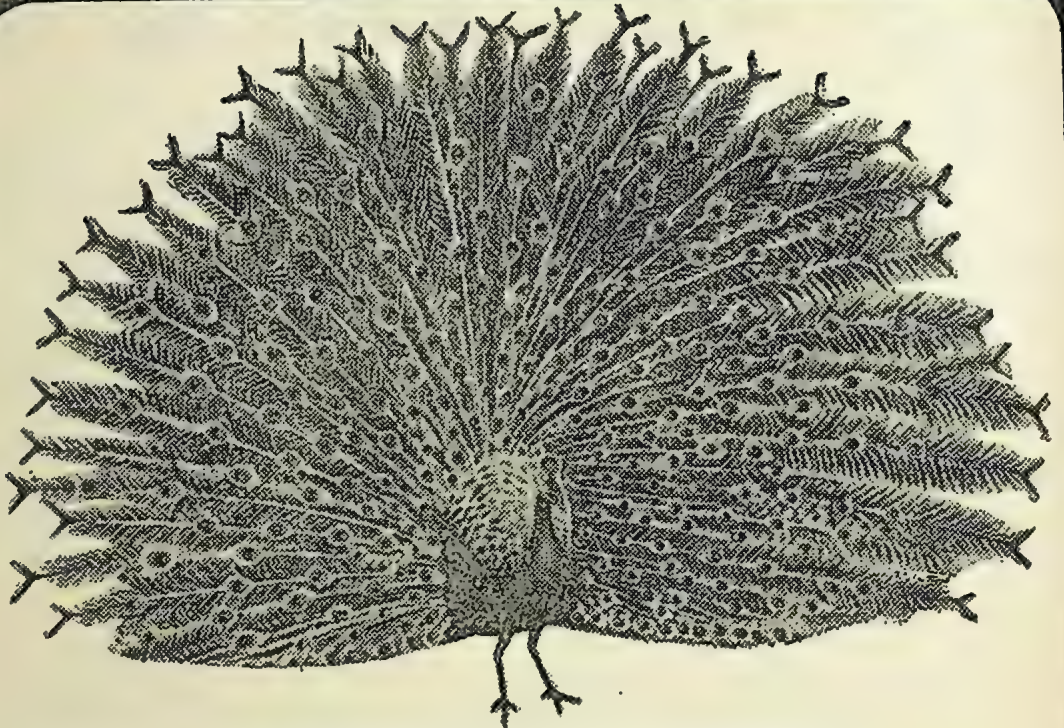
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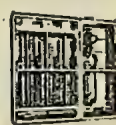
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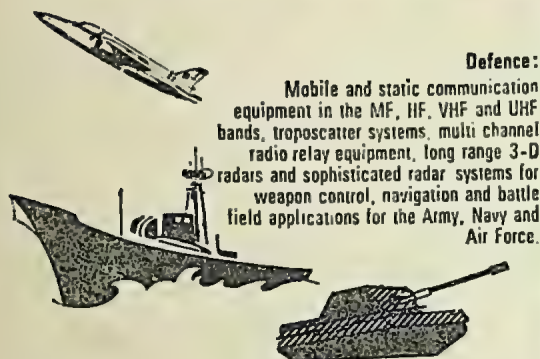
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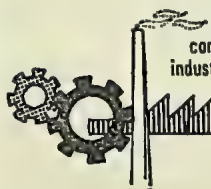
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